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LOWRY: THE CASE FOR FREE TRADE WITH CHINA

NATIONAL REVIEW

Don't Fear a Deficit

ALAN REYNOLDS

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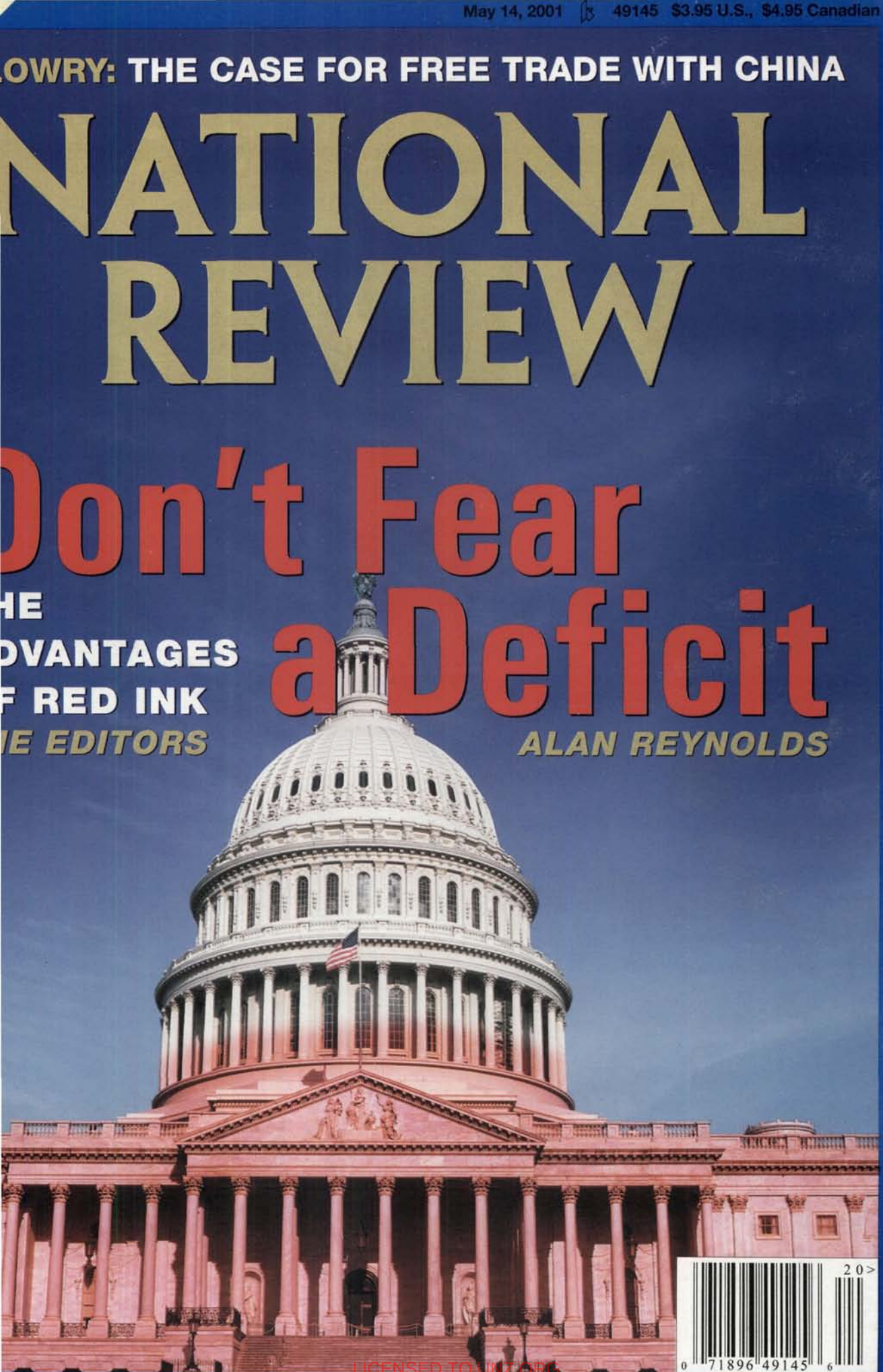

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■ LETTERS ■

THE UNREACHABLES

As a liberal who sees gangsta rap for what it is (a corporate-driven, heartless celebration of violence and racial stereotypes), I read Jay Nordlinger's article "Bang" (April 16) with much interest. However, I think Nordlinger's arguments can be reversed, and used against pro-gun conservatives like Charlton Heston. Okay, you are saying that liberals should be questioned for not questioning rap. That's fine. However, isn't Nordlinger then admitting that promoting guns and violence is wrong? He can't have it both ways. When Heston holds a gun over his head as if it is a holy object at an NRA convention, he is no better than a rapper bragging about his AK-47. Or is it because Heston is an Academy Award-winning white actor who once played Moses that your magazine excuses his behavior? Believe me, many people (liberals and conservatives) abhor gangsta rap (but not all rap: there are rappers out there promoting a positive message like Outkast and others). Yet Heston and his organization have taken things too far by fighting safety locks on guns, and by not listening to the other side. Nordlinger is turning this into a black-and-white issue, literally and figuratively.

Brian Christopher
Chicago, Ill.

JAY NORDLINGER REPLIES: *"Isn't Nordlinger admitting that promoting guns and violence is wrong?" Yes, he is. Certainly the promotion of* gun violence *is wrong, and that's what the rap I wrote about does. Charlton Heston thinks no differently. People like us are repeatedly put in the position of having to point out the obvious: e.g., that lawful gun ownership is right; that unlawful gun ownership is wrong; that the use of guns to protect against crime is right; that the use of guns to commit crimes is wrong; that nuclear missiles in peaceful hands is one thing; that nuclear missiles in the hands of aggressors is another. Blah, blah, blah. We can never rest. There is a difference between the gun over Charlton Heston's head and the gun brandished by the thug with the intent of killing innocents. Actually, the difference lies in the* persons. *Anyone who can't see the difference between an NRA leader whooping it up about gun rights and a thug whooping it up about gun murder is probably unreachable. This belongs in the camp of, "How can you support capital punishment when you oppose abortion?"*

BURSTING THE BUBBLES

Many thanks for Ward Connerly's article "Don't Box Me In" (April 16). Just today I gave a standardized state reading test to my eighth-grade students, and the cover sheet of bubbles to be filled in included a prominent "race" box. One astute child asked me, "Why do they care what race we are?" Before I could answer, another said, "So they know who's smarter, whites or blacks."

Why do they care, indeed? I confessed to my students that I always filled in "other" when I was their age, just to mess up the numbers. Alas, "other" is no longer an option; neither is a French/Irish/Shawnee combination, so I just leave the bubbles blank. I wish the entire country would leave the stupid question of race classification alone.

Lea Mathieu
Ione, Ore.

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

In "The Week" (April 30), NR notes that a "retelling" of *Gone with the Wind* from the point of view of Scarlett O'Hara's black half-sister is in the works. NR then smirks, "Next up: *Moby-Dick*; or *The Black Whale*, by Herman X." Reality beat you to the punch. Just a year ago, Morrow published *Ahab's Wife*, a feminist adaptation of Melville's masterpiece. See heroine Una Spenser fight racism, see her defy traditional gender roles, see her bed Frederick Douglass and tame the maniacal Ahab!

Kevin R. Kosar
New York, N.Y.

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A world of ideas on public policy.

Patents and Public Health: a Good or Bad Mix?

By Dr. Harvey Bale

Some activist groups that oppose "globalization" have campaigned publicly against the alleged deleterious effects of pharmaceutical patents on access to medicines, particularly in the developing world. They point to TRIPS – the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement on patent protection – as the particular villain.

The reality is that TRIPS will accelerate the introduction of new, patented medicines, including treatments for the infectious diseases that are the major killers of children and adults in developing countries. At the same time, neither TRIPS nor any other single international agreement can provide the answer to the problems – poverty, lack of infrastructure, internal civil strife – that prevent people in many developing countries from getting medical care.

Because the foes of patent rights command so much attention from governments and the media, it is worth looking more closely at the issues. As an example, let us take this assertion in a recent report from a well-known non-governmental organization, Oxfam: 'Every week, 200,000 people die of infectious diseases, the great majority of them women, men and children living in poverty in the developing world. Global patent rules agreed at the World Trade Organization in 1994 are deepening the public-health crisis by increasing the cost of medicines."

Infectious diseases are indeed a serious developing-country problem, but Oxfam's argument is illogical. In these countries, access is often poor for even the most basic and off-patent "essential" medicines. Less than 5% of the essential medicines as defined by the World Health Organization's essential drugs list (EDL) are covered by patent protection anywhere in the world, let alone in developing-countries, many of which have no effective intellectual property laws.

> ***Without strong and effective global intellectual property rules, the gap between developed and developing countries will only grow in the future.***

Further, where patent protection has been introduced in the past decade, it has not had a significant negative impact on access to medicines.

Even at the lowest prices, many of the world's poorest people cannot afford or obtain low-cost generic treatments for malaria, TB, and other common diseases. Political priorities given to public health, the provision of financing for poorer people and medical infrastructure (rural clinics, diagnostic facilities), and involving churches and responsible NGOs in delivery are the determining factors in providing access to health care.

Some activists also freely assert that patents give innovators of new treatments unfair "monopoly" power over prices throughout the 20-year life of a patent. This ignores reality in two ways. Firstly, patents give marketing exclusivity rights to a single drug or vaccine, not a monopoly, since there are usually alternative treatments to any medicine. For example, there are at least six patented protease inhibitors for the treatment of AIDS. The existence of a number of new treatment options, spurred by patent protection, helps ensure medical choice and price competition. Secondly, the holder of a "20 year" patent right has actually only 8-10 years to recover investment costs in a new medicine and to fund new research to survive, since it typically takes 10-12 years of tests and regulatory review for innovative medicines to reach patients.

Compulsory licensing – under which governments force companies to license their patented medicines to generic manufacturers – has been touted as a solution to the access issue. Its proponents see the issue in terms of consumer price benefits. The competition benefits are small, however, and the long term damage of widespread use of compulsory licensing is likely to be significant.

Today, TRIPS is encouraging companies in India, Korea and other developing countries to shift from manufacturing generics towards pursuing their own innovative research – including the use of biotechnology tools. But if loose compulsory licensing rules are adopted, both the patients and the economies of these countries will ultimately suffer through the withdrawal of these new competitors, who will find it easier to slip back into their old business strategy of copying medicines others have discovered.

The fact is, without full respect for TRIPS, many countries' industries and patients risk losing out on the benefits of the genome-based research that is increasingly the basis of biomedical innovation. Thus, the real global social threat is that – without strong and effective global intellectual property rules – the gap between developed and developing countries will only grow in the future.

Dr Harvey Bale is Director General of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Associations, in Geneva, Switzerland (www.ifpma.org).

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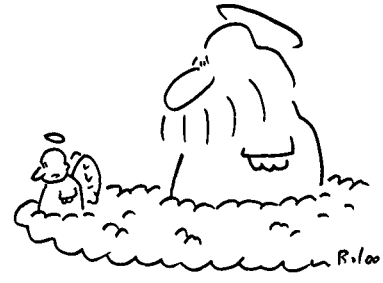
■ FOR THE RECORD ■

■ President **Bush**, speaking on April 15: "Excessive federal spending threatens economic vitality. What we want is a stronger economy, not larger federal government." . . . Tax Freedom Day arrives on May 3, latest date ever, according to Tax Foundation, which annually calculates day Americans will have earned enough money to pay off all their taxes. . . . In Associated Press poll, 69 percent of Republicans and 62 percent of Democrats say income taxes are "too high." . . . Bush, who has not returned to Yale since own graduation and won't attend alma mater's 300th-anniversary celebration, agrees to give commencement speeches at the U.S. Naval Academy and Notre Dame.

■ White House political aide **Karl Rove**, quoted by Associated Press: "We intended to have a smaller profile than the previous administration." . . . Attorney general **John Ashcroft**, on press interviews with Oklahoma City bomber **Timothy McVeigh**: "I do not want anyone to be able to purchase access to the podium of America with the blood of 168 innocent victims."

■ Rep. **Pete Stark** (D., Calif.), on Bush budget, in Alameda *Times-Star*: "the embodiment of the anti-Christ. . . . [It] goes against all the teachings of Christ. It turns its back on the poor, it turns its back on education and health care for young children. The holiest week of the year [Easter], to release this budget that flies in the face of all Christ's teachings is infamy." . . . "Our national goal must be to ensure that every child, by kindergarten, knows the alphabet, colors, shapes, and sizes," writes Sen. **Paul Wellstone** (D., Minn.), in forthcoming book *The Conscience of a Liberal*. "This will require well-paid professional teachers, assisted by skillful and well-paid teaching assistants." . . . Sen. **Evan Bayh** (D., Ind.), on running for president, in Louisville *Courier-Journal*: "I'm thinking about it." . . . Prominent New Hampshire Republicans ask Sen. **Bob Smith** (R., N.H.) to step aside for Senate candidacy of Rep. **John Sununu** (R., N.H.), on grounds he can't beat Gov. **Jeanne Shaheen** (D.) in general election—polls show Shaheen beating Smith, but not Sununu. . . . Rhode Island Republicans hope term-limited Gov. **Lincoln Almond** will challenge Rep. **Patrick Kennedy** (D.). . . . Rep. **Tony Hall** (D., Ohio) turns down offer from Bush administration to head Peace Corps.

■ In BAMPAC poll of black voters, **Jesse Jackson** wins 83 percent favorable rating, versus 73 percent for **Colin Powell** and 32 percent for **Clarence Thomas** (who has unfavorable score of 48 percent). . . . Urban League president **Hugh Price**, on Hispanics overtaking blacks in census, in *National Journal*: "Moving from being the second-largest population group to the third has resulted in a profound shift in strategic thinking." . . . National Council of La Raza president **Raul Yzaguirre** complains:



"You just created Eve a week ago, and already she's a special-interest group."

"In the competition for jobs, there's a sense that the gatekeepers for minorities are black, that affirmative action and diversity officers as well as the community affairs folks in government, business, and nonprofit sectors are all African Americans." . . . Virginia high-school principal **David Smith**, following news his students were instructed to forge parents' signatures on federal-funding forms, according to Associated Press: "It is not a good thing that we ask students to forge their parents' signatures, but if these students had done what they should have done for this form three months ago, we would not be in the position where we need to look for shortcuts."

■ In Florida poll, 61 percent believe voters own "complete" responsibility for marking ballots correctly, and 20 percent think voters have "most" of the responsibility. . . . Harvard invites **Bill Clinton** to become "visiting fellow" at Kennedy School of Government. . . . U.S. Holocaust Memorial council criticizes chairman Rabbi **Irving Greenberg** for supporting **Marc Rich** pardon. . . . President **Reagan**'s office lease in Century City won't be renewed when it expires later this year. Chief of staff **Joanne Drake** tells AP, "There's a lot of history here. But it doesn't make a lot of sense to have such a large space when he doesn't come here anymore." . . . Board of Metro transit system in Washington, D.C., votes against adding Reagan's name to signage for Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, despite pressure from congressional Republicans. . . . Federal judge blocks publication of *The Wind Done Gone*, a retelling of *Gone with the Wind* from the point of view of Scarlett O'Hara's mulatto half-sister. . . . Secretaries Day is now Administrative Professionals Day.

■ **James Watson**, discoverer of DNA's double-helix structure, in *The Independent*: "I strongly favor controlling our children's genetic destinies. Working intelligently and wisely to see that good genes dominate as many lives as possible is the truly moral way for us to proceed." . . . State Department, in travel warning, "cautions Americans, especially Americans originally from China, that there may be a risk of being detained upon returning to China, if they have at any time engaged in activities or published writings critical of Chinese government policies." . . . Taiwan president **Chen Shui-bian** says he will seek transit visa to visit United States following Latin America trip. . . . Thanks to abortion as sex-selection tool, number of girls per 1,000 boys born in India has fallen from 962 in 1981 to 927 today, and in Punjab state it is 793, reports *New York Times*.

■ Bush, on taxpayer dollars: "Some members of the Senate are, unfortunately, proving the point I make all across the country—if you send it, they will spend it." **NR**

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THE WEEK

■ Steven Spielberg quit the board of the Boy Scouts—thereby earning a merit badge in Hollywood.

■ The leaders of 34 nations met in Quebec to reiterate their interest in a "Free Trade Area of the Americas" including every Western Hemisphere country but Cuba. To make this zone a reality is going to be tough work for the administration. NAFTA was easier by comparison because the Mexican government wanted it so much. Latin American countries are not as eager for a free-trade deal; Brazil, the largest economy in South America, is the most reluctant. The Bush administration, if it really wants a free-trade agreement, is going to have to make it attractive to others. It may, for example, need to reconsider our "anti-dumping" laws, which protect U.S. firms from the "unfair competition" of cheap imports. These laws punish American consumers and rankle our trading partners—notably Brazil. Trade agreements happen when the participating countries face down protectionist lobbies at home for the greater good of their economies. By putting the anti-dumping laws on the table, Bush can lead by example.

■ Any world trade conference now comes accompanied by a world anti-trade conference: rock- and bottle-throwing louts who move, like groupies, from Seattle to Quebec to wherever. The embers of the Left—professors, students who haven't cracked a book in years, bored, spoiled rich kids—have been looking for an organizing principle since the death of Communism deprived them of an enemy to appease. They seem chaotic and contemptible, but such people have produced serious revolutions, given the proper conditions. If there were a worldwide depression, global capitalism would take the blame and the rioters would gain adherents; some despot might later look back on the days of his Starbucks putsch.

■ For many years, death and violence have been slipping from daily life. Deathbeds have moved from homes to hospitals; people have moved from farms, where animals are regularly slaughtered, to cities; war has become professionalized. Similarly, public executions, tortures, and even humiliations (such as the stocks) have fallen by the wayside. Now attorney general John Ashcroft has decided that the May 16 execution of Timothy McVeigh will be broadcast on closed-circuit television for survivors of his crime and relatives of the victims who wish to see it, though no record will be kept. There are arguments both for and against public justice: Dr. Johnson thought Tyburn, London's scaffold, taught moral lessons; they were lost on his friend James Boswell, however, who attended hangings obsessively, and "partied" afterwards. But the impetus to buck the broad trend in McVeigh's case is mistaken. Because he committed a celebrity crime, his victims' families will get celebrity treatment. We are not executing him for their sakes, but for ours. We are expelling an evil man from our midst, and warning all like him to beware. Neither action requires an audience.

■ The results of a decade-long government-sponsored study of 1,300 children are in: The more time kids spend in day care, the more likely they are to be aggressive and disobedient in kindergarten. The finding is true for boys and girls, across income levels, and in all day-care arrangements. One of the researchers lamely concluded, "We don't understand why we got these findings." But this news does not come out of the clear blue sky. Studies began showing the negative effects of nonmaternal care 15 years ago. In 1986, Prof. Jay Belsky, then at Penn State, called the first year of life, in particular, a "window of vulnerability," and recommended that a parent be the primary caregiver. As a researcher on the latest report, he suggests that reducing the time in day care would reduce the negative outcomes. The "mommy wars" are bound to rage on, despite the mounting evidence of day care's dangers, but this most recent report about defiant kindergartners should generate sympathy for the working mothers of children being minded by someone else. Who can blame them for not wanting to be with the little brats?

■ Clear, honest English is among the casualties of the modern race riot. In Cincinnati, blacks indicted for looting, arson, and vandalism are referred to as "protesters." The press deodorizes anarchy, calling it "civil unrest." The "protesters" are "venting their frustration." Yet there is nothing civil about the violence practiced by these people, more than 800 of whom have been arrested in the city's worst racial spasm since 1968. One white woman was dragged from her car and beaten; a white man was pulled from his truck and beaten. Remember poor Reginald Denny, in Los Angeles? These are vile "hate crimes," but nobody will say so, least of all Cincinnati's black leaders. The Rev. Damon Lynch, pastor of the city's New Prospect Baptist Church, has said he wants the "protests" to continue until everyone charged with a crime is granted amnesty. This is pure incitement. The people of Cincinnati will certainly not be able to stop lawless mob violence until they learn to call it by its proper name.

■ The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development is running a campaign against "tax havens": i.e., countries with low taxes and strong financial-privacy laws. Critics say that it is picking on weak countries. By the OECD's standards, Ireland, Switzerland, Austria, and Singapore are tax havens—as is the United States—but its list of 41 such havens is composed mainly of small, poor countries in the Caribbean.

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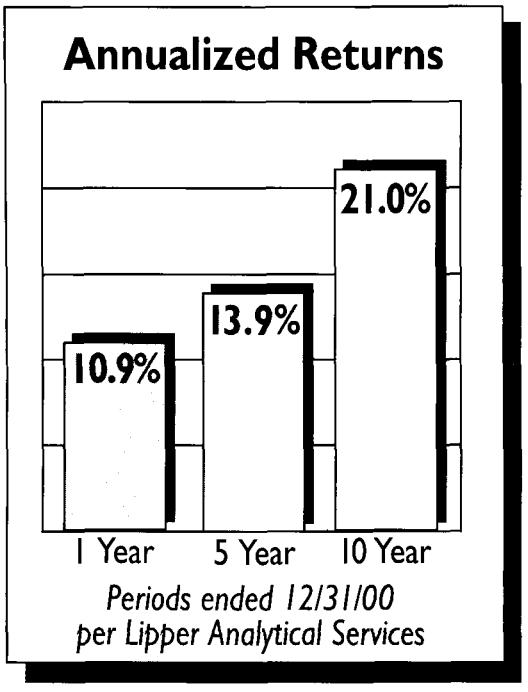

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The OECD itself is a club for industrialized nations. What concerns OECD members such as France (where the group is based) is that people are using the tax havens to evade high taxes on capital in their home countries. The OECD wants the rich countries to impose trade and financial sanctions on the havens unless they change their laws. All of this is spelled out in two OECD reports with the ominous titles *Harmful Tax Competition* and *Towards Global Tax Cooperation*. America can sink the OECD plan by not participating in it. In Congress, opposition is being led by conservatives (who rather like "tax competition") and members of the black caucus (who are defensive of the Caribbean). Treasury secretary Paul O'Neill is on the fence. He says countries should be able to set their own tax rates, but has also supported "effective tax information exchange"—i.e., governments' sharing information about taxpayers. O'Neill has a choice: Side with privacy, free trade, and fairness for poor countries, or with double taxation and the government of France. It should be easy.

■ Conservatives who value combat readiness on the battlefield over "equal opportunity" in the ranks have recommended that Defense Secretary Rumsfeld disband the 50-year-old Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS). Established by George C. Marshall in 1951 to advise the secretary of defense on issues of concern to women in uniform, the 33-member committee, made up principally of civilian women, has become a feminist lobby that harangues the Pentagon "patriarchy" on behalf of its destructive agenda. Its latest crusade has been to harass the Navy to integrate its submarine crews. It condemns any attempt to examine current questionable policies, such as co-ed basic training, as hostility to women. Which makes it inexplicable that in early February, Rumsfeld appointed eight new members to DACOWITS—who had been chosen by his predecessor, William Cohen. Also, Rumsfeld's deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, addressed an audience of feminists and the men who fear them at the group's golden jubilee in April. Wolfowitz praised the committee's "practical and sensible advice," and said he looked forward "to another five decades of partnership." President Bush dared to enrage lawyers by eliminating the American Bar Association's role in judicial nominations, but it seems his Pentagon team is unwilling to pick a fight with a bunch of girls.

Mississippi Stands Pat

One quarter stars and bars, its flag
Can cause the Left to retch and gag,
Though down where hulking catfish Moms
Make mincemeat out of prowling Toms,
They should have known the voters would
Whomp those of that persuasion good:
Which happened last week, as rude cries
Suggest it's getting to those guys.

—W. H. von Dreele

■ By a 2-to-1 margin, Mississippi voted to keep the Confederate battle flag as part of its state flag. The flag sends a mixed message, honoring heroism even as it recalls secession in the name of slavery. Fort Sumter was bombarded 140 years ago. Symbols, even old ones, are important, but anti-flag activists like the NAACP should have more pressing concerns, such as failing public schools. If the people of Mississippi want to cherish, rewrite, or ignore their past, so be it.

■ In 1998, Congress passed a law denying federal financial aid to college students who had been convicted of possessing drugs, but so many students failed to fill out the relevant question on their aid applications that the Clinton administration declined to enforce it. The Bush administration has decided to uphold the law, which is the executive's job. Congress should repeal it. The war on drugs, which hasn't been won any other way, won't be won through the back door of aid cutoffs. Students will only lie. While Congress is at it, it should repeal financial aid.

■ Male-against-male prison rape, America's most ignored crime problem, is finally getting the attention it deserves. Unfortunately, it may not be the right kind of attention. Last month, Human Rights Watch, an advocacy group in New York, issued a report on the subject that got major news outlets to take notice. The report's body recites a litany of statistics familiar to those who have studied the issue: About 20 percent of America's 1.75 million male inmates experience unwanted sexual contact behind bars, and almost none of these assaults get reported. Many of the report's recommendations—calls for congressional hearings, improved management, better training for prison staff members, and better data collection—deserve serious consideration. But the report ultimately devolves into a left-wing rant against the prison system. Its leading recommendations are that Congress make it easier for prisoners to sue and allow judges to issue consent decrees without finding that federal laws were broken. These two proposals would clog America's already overburdened courts and grant highly questionable powers to an already imperious federal judiciary. Such sweeping, impractical proposals threaten the chances of any legislative action on a serious crime problem.

■ Mutual-fund tycoon Dennis Tito has paid $20 million to the Russians to be lifted into orbit in a *Soyuz* spacecraft, over strenuous objections from NASA, which claimed that an untrained tourist would present a danger. It seems to us that Mr. Tito's excursion is to be applauded. Probably few things going on today are more important, or more uplifting, than the human exploration of space. It may be that the only event of our time that will be remembered 10,000 years from now is the *Apollo 11* moon landing. Yet until now this wonderful adventure has been in the hands of two unwieldy 1960s-style bureaucracies,

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Rogue-Patron Linkages in an Emerging World

Thomas H. Henriksen is a senior fellow and associate director at the Hoover Institution.

What a difference a decade makes in international politics. Just ten years ago, the Soviet Union collapsed, China seemed mired in domestic concerns, and the United States appeared headed for a carefree era. Pundits pontificated about a security vacuum while Washington slashed defense spending.

At that time, the so-called rogue states, like Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, were the only clouds looming on the horizon. Isolated internationally, these pariahs demonstrated a propensity for internal cruelty and external threats. They coveted weapons of mass destruction, such as nuclear and biological warheads, and missiles to deliver their deadly payloads. Unpredictable and erratic, they entered Washington's consciousness solely as insular but containable troublemakers.

The United States paid little heed to Moscow or Beijing as it groped for policies to engage or contain rogue states. Our approach fluctuated from confronting Iraq through sanctions, ostracism, and occasional bombing to engaging North Korea through rewarding perceived nuclear restraint with concessions in hopes of changing Pyongyang's behavior.

By the end of the 1990s, the rogue regimes no longer looked so isolated from the major powers. Russia and China sold arms and technology to them, took up their cause in the Security Council as Washington sought to enforce United Nations sanctions against them, and, more recently, reestablished or deepened diplomatic ties.

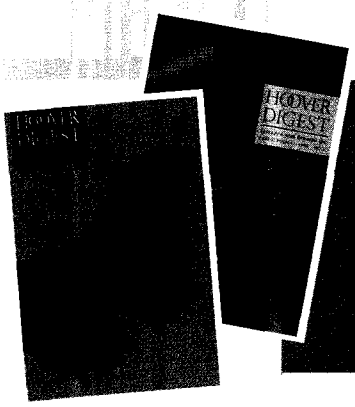
A series of events dramatically announced this turnaround. China's uproar following the accidental bombing of its embassy in Belgrade during NATO's Kosovo air campaign demonstrated that Washington could not lead an attack on rogue-like Serbia without big power consequences. Another example surfaced when North Korea's leader, Kim Jung Il, first consulted with Beijing before agreeing to the historic summit with his South Korean counterpart last June. The recent Russian and Iranian agreement to strengthen military ties is another illustration of this trend.

Rogue states and their former patrons are cooperating for reasons vastly different from their cold war collaboration. Then, Moscow sought to spread communism in the Third World. Devoid of ideological objectives, Russia and China now seek to expand arm sales and exert leverage with Washington for geopolitics, pure and simple. Beijing can turn up the heat on the United States for supporting Taiwan—which China considers its territory—by improving Iraq's air defense systems and selling missile technology to Pakistan, Libya, and Syria. Because Moscow resents U.S. influence in the Balkans and its spearheading the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization into Eastern Europe, it exports tanks and artillery to Iraq and cooperates with Iran to build a nuclear power plant. By confronting the United States asymmetrically, Russia and China can redress their military and political weakness vis-à-vis the sole superpower.

These transformed political realities demand a rethinking of American policy. **Washington must see the world in global terms,** not through a narrow lens trained on a lone maverick. A strategy for undoing the rogue-patron affiliations should also be incorporated into U.S. relations with Moscow and Beijing. Whatever the mix of diplomacy and force, Washington cannot be complacent with the emerging rogue-patron collusion.

— Thomas H. Henriksen

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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NASA and the Russian Space Agency. If progress is to be maintained, private enterprise needs to be brought in, and the huge industries of tourism and entertainment are much more likely to see profits than the old science-fiction standby of asteroid mining. Lewis and Clark were equipped at government expense; but the real opening up of the West was done by thousands of individuals who just wanted to go there for one reason or another, frequently with dollar signs in their eyes. We wish Mr. Tito "Bon voyage." We hope others will follow his example. And if NASA will not accommodate their desires, we hope some private American alternative will soon make itself available. It would be an odd thing if the banner of private enterprise were carried into space by one of the quintessential creations of the USSR.

■ You offer someone a negotiated deal to end a dispute, and he rejects it, coming to kill you instead. That's the position the Israelis find themselves in with the Palestinians. What's to be done about it? According to Secretary of State Colin Powell, very little. The Israelis moved into the Gaza Strip to clean up positions from which Palestinians had been mortaring civilians in Israel. Powell criticized this as "excessive and disproportionate," and called for restraint on both sides. With this advice in mind, the required moderate and proportionate response would be to complain to whoever will listen that there are killers around but no cops. In his military days, moreover, Powell gave his name to a famous doctrine that the key to winning battles is the use of overwhelming force. At the time of the Gulf War, for example, he said of the Iraqi army, "First we're going to cut it off. Then we're going to kill it." Restraint and proportion were introduced only after victory (to a fault, as it turns out). Palestinians, like the Iraqis earlier, have embarked on a strategy bound to lead to calamity for them. The current bout of fighting will not end until they realize that the price they are paying is far higher than any costs they can inflict on the Israelis. That is the Powell doctrine in a nutshell.

■ Wu Jianmin was arrested in early April by the Chinese secret police, a fact that became known later in the month. He was the fifth scholar to be detained in the current crackdown, and the second U.S. citizen. Mr. Wu is a writer; apparently the Chinese authorities believe he was involved in the publication of *The Tiananmen Papers* (see NR, 2/5/01). The other U.S. citizen currently being held is Li Shaomin, a professor of business studies. The State Department has responded to these arrests by issuing a warning to all China-born scholars visiting that country, especially those who have written material that is critical of the Beijing junta. The Chinese Communists countered the State Department action with an angry demand that Washington "correct the mistake and take measures to eliminate the negative effects created by the so-called warning." We quite understand the need for circumspection while inquiries are being made about the whereabouts of our citizens; but surely at some point we should make it clear, in public, that the continued harassment, arrest, and interrogation of U.S. citizens will have some "negative effects" on China itself.

■ We reported in February that Steve Thoburn, a greengrocer in the north of England, was to be prosecuted for selling a pound of bananas—a pound, not a kilogram. Overnight he became the "metric martyr," for it had been legal for more than a century to use either imperial or metric weights and measures, according to choice. The European Union, though, has passed a decree that the metric system is to be imposed in all but a few picturesque cases. A judge has now ruled Thoburn guilty, establishing that it is a criminal offense to use the imperial system as he did. This may seem a small issue—a denial of choice to consumers. In reality, it advances the new principle that bureaucratic decrees from Brussels have supremacy over British law as determined by the democratic process in Parliament. If Thoburn does not appeal and win, the House of Commons might as well disband.

■ Still haven't booked this summer's vacation? How about Europe's newest theme park, Stalin World? Brainchild of former Soviet wrestling champion Viliumas Malinauskas, Stalin World is 75 miles from Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania. Transport is no problem, though: Visitors will be herded onto cattle trucks in Vilnius and transported along a railway line marked by the names of Siberian labor camps. The park itself is circled with barbed wire, watchtowers, and speakers blaring patriotic Soviet songs. Inside are more than 60 statues of Lenin, Stalin, and other Communist icons, some up to 30 feet tall, as well as prison-camp barracks "in the style of the times." Mr. Malinauskas allows that his theme park is not to everyone's taste, but asserts: "You shouldn't turn your back on history." Stalin World is a bargain: only $1.40 to get in. To get *out*, of course, you have to run across a minefield pursued by dogs . . .

■ The spirit of Annie Oakley lives on. Personal-protection expert Paxton Quigley is now marketing a "SuperBra" for the woman who wants to pack heat. Made of durable elastic, Velcro, and a soft plastic holster, the bra allows its wearer easy access to a canister of pepper spray, a .38 caliber revolver, or more—"It all depends on how big you are," says Quigley. Of course.

■ Our award for Lefty Rant of the Week goes to novelist Barbara Kingsolver (*The Poisonwood Bible*), writing for *The Nation*. Laments Ms. Kingsolver: "[W]e now have a new administration that's hostile to the things I love most: human kindness, the dignity of diversity, and the wild glory of life on earth." Ascending from the merely hysterical to the positively foam-flecked, the lady warns of the horrors that will follow if citizens do not respond to her call for action: "Civil rights and reproductive choice I suppose we could win back in time (though not the lives lost along the way), but the waters and wild lands devastated will never come back." Did that parenthesis stop you in your tracks? Us, too.

■ Michael Joyce has announced his retirement after 15 years of running the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, the largest conservative foundation in the country. This position,

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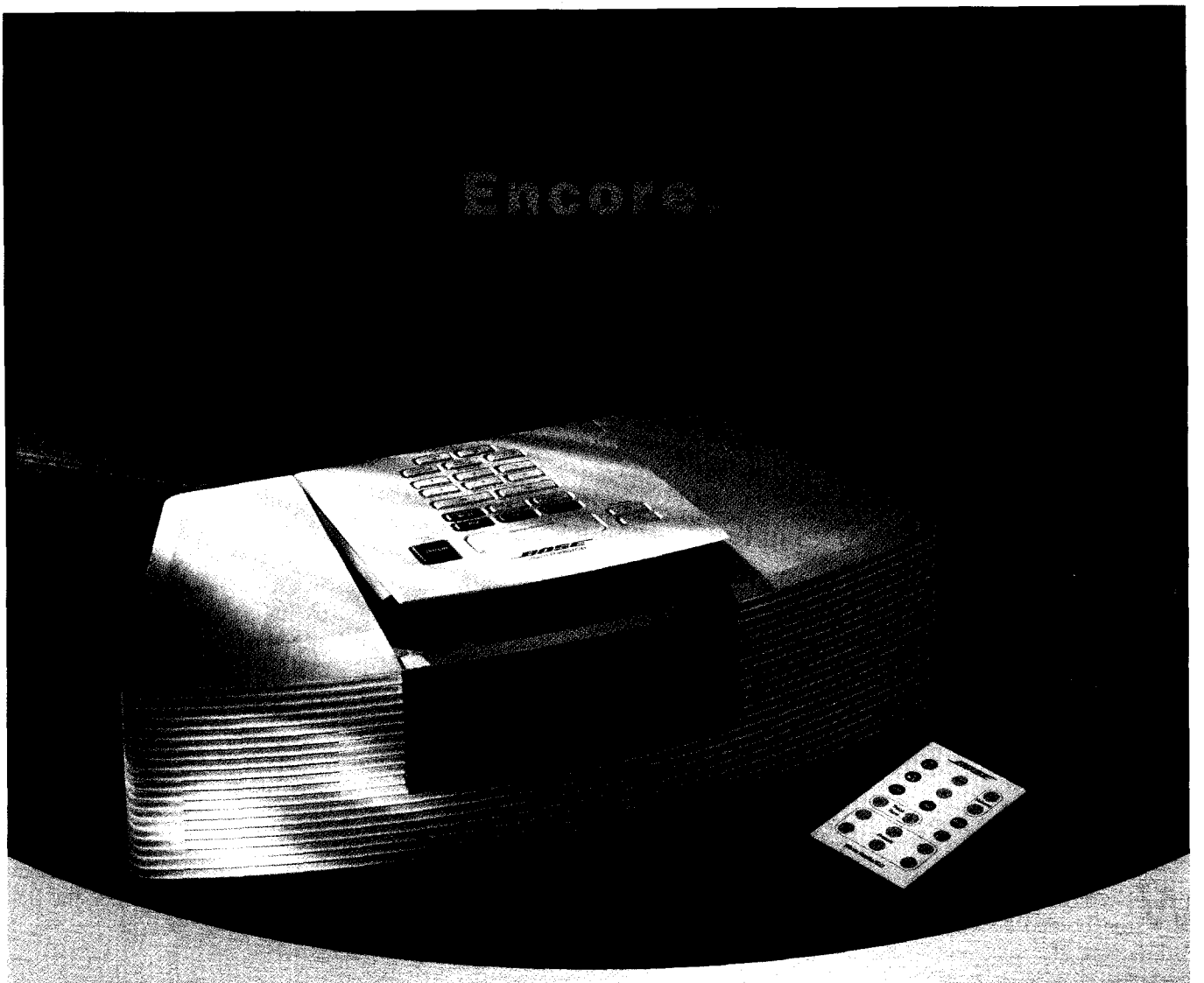

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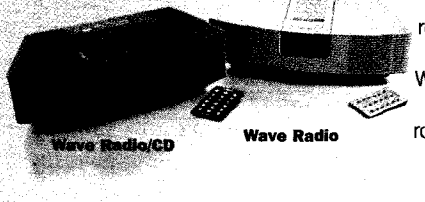

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or more correctly, the way in which Joyce maximized this position, made him the chief operating officer of the conservative movement. For the past decade and a half, wherever you looked in the battle of ideas, a light dusting would have turned up his fingerprints. If a shaft of free-market light fell upon a dirigiste econ. department, if a classical historian popped up on a trendy campus, if a law school sought to reopen diplomatic relations with the "monocultural" world, chances are that Mike Joyce had shaped the deal and a Bradley grant had smoothed the transition. If a new magazine arrived to afflict comfortable views, if a contrarian opinion clattered onto the PBS schedule, if a think tank launched a salient into occupied territory, Mike Joyce had probably been spotted at the local airport a week before. Over the period of his Bradley service, it's difficult to recall a single, serious thrust against incumbent liberalism that did not begin or end with Mike Joyce. A job very well done.

■ After being nominated three times for a Pulitzer Prize, *Wall Street Journal* columnist Dorothy Rabinowitz won one this year. She has been a tough-minded and hardworking investigative reporter, quick to scent fraud and hypocrisy. She has been indispensable at the *Journal* ever since she got there.

TAXES

A Misplaced Fear

WHEN it comes to the economy, President Bush has been tongue-tied. This is not just a result of his famously mangled diction. His well-spoken aides have the same problem. Sometimes they say that signs of an economic slump are reasons to pass his tax cut. At other times they concede that his tax cut could not do much to fight a recession because most of the cut would not take effect until 2006. If Bush made his tax cut take effect faster, he would be able to make an economic case for it without wavering. So why doesn't he accelerate it?

Because of a political taboo. A faster tax cut would require the federal government to make do with less revenue. And that, in turn, might plunge the federal budget into deficit. Which is unthinkable.

Actually, it doesn't take a deficit to scare Republicans these days. It takes the mere prospect of one. What they fear is that a deeper, faster tax cut would cause the official government projections to forecast a deficit for any of the next ten years. The distinction is important because the projections are likely to be wrong. They ignore, among other things, the effect tax policy can have on the economy. A tax cut that causes a deficit on paper will not do so in reality if it stimulates economic growth sufficient to keep the budget in balance.

And if a deficit did occur in reality? The heavens would not fall. The difference between government revenues and spending does not have much economic significance. Deficits do not lead to inflation unless governments finance them by printing money. Nor need deficits raise interest rates. Even if government borrowing slightly increased interest rates—and in the context of the global market for credit, the increase would indeed be slight—the effect would be trumped by another factor: Tax cuts reduce interest rates because they increase the incentive to lend. (A tax cut lets lenders get the same *after-tax* return on a loan with a lower interest rate.)

Large deficits were compatible with high rates of economic growth and falling rates of inflation in the 1980s. In general, deficits are more a result of economic circumstances than a cause of them. The rapid decline in inflation in the early '80s held revenues down and led to deficits, and the rapid growth of wealth in the '90s boosted revenues and led to surpluses.

The best argument against deficits is a political one: They lead to profligate spending by masking the cost of government to taxpayers. But that is an argument against chronic deficits caused by overspending, not against occasional deficits that result from a tax cut. Especially since tax cuts encourage spending discipline.

Our point is not that the government should aim to have deficits; it is that deficits in themselves have little power to harm or help. There are plenty of reasons to cut taxes and spending whether the government is in the black or in the red. When cutting spending is difficult and cutting taxes is urgent, however, there is no need for the latter to wait on the former.

A lot of Republicans understand this logic. They know that their fear of projected deficits amounts to fealty to Washington's irrational conventions. They do not wish to pay the political costs of challenging those conventions. But not challenging them has costs, too. If the economy falls into a lasting recession—and Republicans are not seen to have done anything about it—those costs could include the Bush presidency.

TAIWAN

EgrAegis

THE administration's long-awaited decision on arms sales to Taiwan turned out to be a mixed bag. Some weapons were approved for sale, and some others were deferred, most significantly the Arleigh Burke-class destroyers bearing the Aegis missile-tracking system. A few very high-tech items were denied altogether.

The deferral of the Aegis sale is a serious error in judgment. The reasons given by the administration do not hold up under close examination. It is entirely proper for us to exercise caution about selling our most advanced equipment to foreign countries, and the derelictions of the previous administration in this regard are well known. The deferral of Aegis, however, was based not on these considerations, but on the arguments that deployment could anyway not take place until later in this decade and that Taiwan's military may not be capable of operating the system. There were some additional hints from the administration that the sale of Aegis is being held back as a sanction against future bad behavior by the Chinese.

If the Aegis system is so complex, then the more notice Taiwan has of its delivery, the better. It is not an item they

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could suddenly acquire and deploy in an emergency. That a nation as successful in high-tech manufacturing and software as Taiwan should not be able to summon the human skills to operate the system seems unlikely. Certainly they will not begin training their people until they know the sale is going to be approved. Aegis is entirely defensive; it poses no threat to China. If the Beijing leadership does not like our selling missile-tracking equipment to Taiwan, the solution is simple: Let them stop arraying missiles on their side of the Taiwan Strait.

In addition, the administration decided to end our annual review of arms sales to Taiwan, a further signal of misplaced sensitivity to the mainland's government.

"The balance which we think had started toward China's favor in a dangerous way, is righted," a "senior White House official" said when releasing details of the approvals. But where, exactly, is the point of balance between a sheep and a wolf? Taiwan is no threat to China at all, having renounced all claims to the mainland in 1991. The Chinese attitude, by contrast, is unchanged since the Shanghai Communiqué of 1972, when, in words never revoked, China asserted that "the liberation of Taiwan is China's internal affair in which no other country has the right to interfere."

It would have been better to make it plain to the regime in Beijing that the United States is not to be trifled with, will not be intimidated, and will respond to provocations—like the recent harassment of our reconnaissance planes—with clear resolution. Beijing will probably view the failure to approve Aegis as a sign of weakness on the part of the U.S. If so, this is the more dangerous because it comes so close after other signals that could be similarly interpreted: our desperation to win the safe return of our servicemen from Hainan island, the mumbled formulas of regret we issued to that purpose, and the unaccountable delay in resuming reconnaissance flights over the South China Sea.

Wars begin by miscalculation, as when an oligarchic power with a secretive, suspicious mode of internal politics misjudges the resolution of a liberal nation that has loud and open public disagreements about foreign policy. Peace with the cynical oligarchs of Beijing will not be kept by "balance" and such. It will be kept, if at all, by the clear expression of our intention to check aggression when required. Approval of Aegis would have been such an expression. It is a pity that the administration did not see this. All the more important, now, to restart reconnaissance flights, without delay and without apology; to preserve, in the words of the Taiwan Relations Act, "the peace and security of the Western Pacific area."

EDUCATION

Failing Marks

"THE president has made bipartisan education reform the cornerstone of his administration." So reads one of the talking points the White House released at the end of its first 100 days. As the education bill heads through committee markup toward the floor of Congress, we are beginning to see what comes of making a fetish of bipartisanship: a Democratic bill.

President Bush's education proposal was at best a mixed bag. He promised to increase federal spending, even though there is not much evidence that the money already spent has done anything to improve education. He wanted, in addition, to increase the federal role in education by creating a national "accountability system" of tests. On the other hand, Bush had some good ideas: consolidating education programs, giving states more flexibility in spending federal grant money, and taking some tiny steps toward school choice. For the sake of these policies, many conservatives were willing to swallow their objections.

One by one, the conservative components of the bill are quietly dying. The first to go was school choice, which administration officials made clear would not be allowed to be an obstacle to bipartisanship. State flexibility is likely to be a casualty of the committee room. The number of programs being consolidated is shrinking weekly.

Still the Democrats are unappeased. They want a $250 billion increase in education spending over the next ten years—ten times what the president wants. One gets the sense that if the president had proposed $250 billion, the Democrats would be asking for $750 billion. In his speech to Congress in February, Bush adduced the fact that education would get the largest funding increase in his budget as proof of his commitment to the issue. He is in no position to dispute the Democrats' rejoinder that we can show even more commitment by multiplying that spending by ten.

The White House is desperate to score legislative "successes"—bills passed by Congress and signed by Bush. But a bill that offers more to the teachers unions than to schoolchildren is not a success. The education bill emerging in Congress is such a bill, and it does not deserve to pass—or to be enacted.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Green Bush

AFTER being hammered for taking a second look at some of the many environmental regulations cranked out by Bill Clinton during his final weeks in office, the Bush administration began trying to improve its image by issuing new regulations of its own.

In late April, Bush chose to support an expensive paperwork exercise for small users of lead, and a new efficiency standard that will boost the cost of a new washing machine by nearly 60 percent. EPA administrator Christine Todd Whitman has recently suggested that her agency will tighten the standards for arsenic in water, although probably not as much as Clinton proposed.

Such backsliding may win Bush's environmental record some faint media praise for being "mixed" rather than "bad." But it also threatens to disillusion parts of his base. For example, the lead reporting rule will adversely affect many small

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businesses, and an overly strict arsenic standard may greatly increase residential water rates in many rural areas where this naturally occurring element is found.

Bush's biggest mistake thus far has been poor communication. The president had the facts on his side in his review of the Clinton regulations. Almost all of them deserve repeal. They would do little to improve public health or the environment, and their potential costs to the public are substantial. But Bush has hardly begun to make that case.

Nor has he done enough to outline a distinctively conservative approach to environmental protection. Contemporary environmentalism, as illustrated by Clinton's regulations, relies on expensive one-size-fits-all federal mandates. In many cases, environmental problems could better be dealt with by state or local governments, or by nongovernmental approaches. Such a Republican environmental alternative holds considerable promise, but the Bush administration needs to do much more to lay the groundwork for it.

OBITUARY

Meldrim Thomson, R.I.P.

MELDRIM THOMSON was elected governor of New Hampshire in 1972, defeating a Republican incumbent in a primary. He transformed the state Republican party and, through imitation, the state Democratic party. His influence, after he completed three two-year terms, is still strong. New Hampshire was the only New England state won by George W. Bush.

The post–World War II New Hampshire Republican party was middle-of-the-road to liberal. Today, all four New Hampshire national representatives are conservative Republicans: Gregg, Smith, Bass, and Sununu. The state does not have an income tax or a sales tax. Though reared in the South, always courtly and speaking with a drawl, Mel Thomson was Carborundum hard on the central question of taxation. His reply to advocates of a "broad-based" tax was direct. He ran on the platform "ax the tax."

Not surprisingly, New Hampshire began to enjoy an economic boom. Businesses moved in, especially high-tech. Refugees poured across the border from "Taxachusetts." New Hampshire became a good place to invest. After Thomson left office, all serious statewide and national candidates "took the pledge" against taxes. Even Jeanne Shaheen, the present governor and a moderate Democrat, "took the pledge" when running for her first term, and kept her word.

Now, after thirty years, two developments threaten Thomson's heritage: 1) the very prosperity he helped to create. In fact, as people become wealthier, they want more public services. And 2) the state supreme court, which, on dubious grounds, has ruled unconstitutional the established method of paying for the public schools by means of the property tax. But no alternative method has yet made it through the state legislature.

"Ax the tax," "Keep your guns," "Live free or die." Mel Thomson was a great man, though (or perhaps "and so") he was despised in Hanover, home of Dartmouth College. Accused by liberals of having 19th-century ideas, he replied, "They are wrong: My beliefs are rooted in the values of the 17th century, and I'm proud of it." He died at his farm in Orford, N.H., at 89.

—JEFFREY HART

■ NOTES & ASIDES ■

Notes on Civil Manners

—Excerpts, mostly from WFB's end of an exchange with Michael Kinsley in Slate *magazine, March 26–29. "The Breakfast Table" is a* Slate *feature that calls for five consecutive daily letters.*

March 26

Dear Michael:

Inasmuch as informality is encouraged in such exchanges as we are embarking on, let's spend a minute on your first name. I remember, 60 or 70 *Firing Line*s ago, venturing to say to you, "Is there any problem if I introduce you as *Michael* Kinsley, instead of Mike?" You nodded your head; as I think back on it—perhaps I intimidated you, a memorable period because it was so brief. But you now uniformly do the *Mike* bit and I begin to wonder whether there is ideology there, as in *Jimmy* Carter and *Al* Gore.

You are entitled to comment (*Slate* being your magazine, that much is obvious) that I am called *Bill* Buckley. My response is in two parts. First, William is a little bit of a jawbreaker. Even Prince William has become *Wills*. Having said that, I report ruefully that, in trade, everybody now calls me William, as in, "What system are you using, William?" For a while I tried to stop that, not to plead the cause of Bill, but the cause of Mr. Buckley. I have abandoned the crusade. Lost causes have been my coddled pets over a lifetime, but I am not strong enough to take on a fresh one, even on behalf of civility.

And second, I do not use "Bill" in any situation in which formality is so much as suggested, viz., my letterhead. When I named Rich Lowry editor of NATIONAL REVIEW, I made bold to say to him that when his name appeared on the masthead, it would seem to me unobjectionable if he were to emerge as "Richard" Lowry. But I didn't press the point, and so waited eagerly for the first Lowry issue of NR, upon seeing which I was gratified not only by the magazine as a whole, which I regularly am, but by the masthead.

My son (whom I call Christo) signs his name "Christopher," which goes to make a supernumerary point, namely that he inherited yet another of his father's graces.

Continued on page 18

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■ NOTES & ASIDES ■

Continued from page 16

March 26

Dear Bill,

Call me Michael. Or whatever you prefer. I don't feel strongly about it, and there are certainly no political implications. While you suggest that "Mike" may connote left-wing egalitarianism, I have also received hate mail from conservatives suggesting that "Mike" connotes a rugged individualism to which no liberal may decently stake a claim. (I'm putting the point more politely than they do.)

One thing I enjoyed about playing Ed McMahon to your Johnny Carson all those years on *Firing Line* was your insistence on addressing people by their last names, as a reaction to the false intimacy of other TV talk shows, which promote the illusion that people who appear on television together all hang out together. But cyberspace is definitely the land of first names, and so is the Pacific Northwest, where I now live, and I'm afraid I like that a lot. In everyday life, and not on television, the false intimacy and symbolic egalitarianism are healthy tributes to real intimacy and equality. So it will be "Bill" for the rest of the week . . .

March 26

Dear Michael:

But you don't really want to talk about the subject, and though it isn't a King Charles's head problem with me, I was a little surprised at your brushing it to one side and asking instead what my views were on nuclear proliferation. . . . Okay, you'll have them and anything else you want from me, but let me linger for a moment on the subject I raised. Harold Nicolson wrote a nice book—what, 50 years ago?—called *Good Behavior* (*Good Behaviour*, of course) in which he touched down on different civilizations and what they individually held as indispensable to their own cultures.

I wish I could remember the details, recalling only that stiff-upper-lipness was the British sine qua non. I don't remember that he brought up a distinctively American cultural signature, though I do remember a discussion on the general question that asked, If to be thought unmanly is the supreme animadversion in England, what is it in America? (Answer: to be called humorless.) But I want to say this much, that there is a matter of sensibilities here that merits more than the dismissal you attempt. You are saying that you are a part of a culture in which everybody is Bill and Mike and that you are quite happy with it.

But shouldn't you be unhappy that there are those who are not happy with it? Should I train myself not to wince when a total stranger from CompUSA asks, "What can I do for you today, William?" My roots are only half Connecticut Yankee. My mother and father were resolute southerners, and we lived in the winter months in Camden, S.C., where they are buried. There was in Camden, when we settled there, a reigning presence, a 65-year-old widow whose approval everyone sought both because she was *arbiter elegantiae* in Camden and because she was the soul of high standards and kindness. Age 13, I heard her recount to my mother that a colored lady had put in for a job to replace the retiring cook/maid/laundress and when asked her name, gave it as "Mrs. Whittaker." This brought laughter from Camden's first lady, who said simply that of course she would not hire a servant who gave her name as "Mrs." anything.

It took me a while to turn around on that because I lived in a Jim Crow world and it was some years before the implications of the episode marshaled my thoughts. I remember reading of the amusement Allen Tate expressed to a colleague on receipt of a letter signed merely "Faulkner." "I never heard of anybody signing a letter using just the surname except a British lord." Well, that doesn't mean, of course, that British lords shouldn't maintain the habit, or that—if it pleases them—one shouldn't address them as Lord. The American contribution here, in the sense of the democratization of manners, is the universal "Mr." Imagine Thomas Jefferson consenting to anything other than Mr. Jefferson.

At dinner in Ames, Iowa, I asked the Hoover historian whether the former president was regularly referred to as "Mr. President" (I knew him a little, and he was "Mr. Hoover," or "Chief," in my own experience). Vexed by the question, he looked at the first 150 letters received by Hoover after he left the White House and found an equal use of "Dear Mr. President," "Dear Mr. Hoover," and "Dear Sir." But contemporary ex-presidents would kill before acquiescing in anything other than "Mr. President." We can both worry about any tendency to overdo honorifics, but you seem to leave me alone to worry about the galloping reluctance to speak of Mr. Kinsley or Mr. Buckley. It is unwatched movements in either of the two directions that we should watch out for.

March 27

Dear Michael:

Ah, but you can be sly. Because I thought it interesting to inquire into forms of address, you transform this into "the sort of thing the Buckleys discuss over breakfast," which of course it is not. I am all the more gingered up by the subject precisely because I do *not* tend to bring it up—have I ever written about Mike/Michael Kinsley? And then you say that "there is no way for strangers like the computer salesman to know your preference." My entire point is that they shouldn't need to calibrate a preference; they should go with conventional forms of address, of which the customary and polite thing is Mr. Kinsley, just as "Dear Mr. Kinsley" is not thought to be a pass but an entirely neutral salutation. Any letter that begins without that opening word is correctly thought at least provocative, probably bellicose.

Continued on page 20

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■ NOTES & ASIDES ■

Continued from page 18

Oh yes, [you ask about] the "Dear William Buckley." It is even worse than "Dear William" and is not a new grotesquerie but a pretty old one, lanced by Nancy Mitford in that part of her book that escaped the devastation of Evelyn Waugh. Did I notice that you failed to declare yourself on your own convictions in the matter? Or was it that your mind had gone back to nuclear proliferation? ["Nuclear proliferation," to which *Kinsley had never referred, was* used by WFB as a metaphor for conventional political concerns.] Dear Michael, I do not mean to offend you, and if you command me, I will desert the subject of manners entirely, with only this little reminder that civility is the bony tissue of the good life. And you know it intuitively, because you are capable of very nice spontaneous things, like sending me that new electronic mouse to Switzerland.

Ever, Bill

March 27

Dear Bill:

1) You prefer to be addressed as Mr. Buckley, at least until familiarity has some basis in fact. But is this symmetrical? In the world of universal first names where I live, everybody is equal in this small symbolic respect, which is nice. Is there equality of salutation in your world, or do you first-name people who last-name you? And are you comfortable with that?

2) You say that addressing strangers as Mr. is "conventional . . . customary, and polite," and by implication needs no more defense than that. A classic conservative argument. But even you must allow that conventions and customs change, no? Believe me, in Seattle and in cyberspace, first names are the near-universal convention and custom. Addressing someone as "Mr." is positively impolite, verging on insult.

So if you prefer Mr., it seems to me you must defend it on its merits and not rest on custom.

March 27

Dear Michael,

Just, finally, on two questions you put to me. The first suggested that manners, as practiced in cyberworld, are universal, imposing on me the burden of justifying conventional practices other than by pleading tradition. Okay. I suppose one way to confront the point full-frontally is to say simply that in fact everybody isn't equal except in the small symbolic respect that everyone appears *equal in a phone directory and a voting* booth. But teachers and pupils aren't equal, nor are colonels and privates. In not only minor but major symbolic respects, they are equal before the law and before God, but why do I have to bear the burden of proving lapidary distinctions?

You ask how do I do it? I have a rule, which is that no undergraduate calls me Bill. That's not only because I think this right, but because as you get older, you beware most keenly self-serving biological cosmetics, in this situation the older man who affects to be one of the boys. My second rule is to ask to be called Bill by those who have graduated from college and attained a certain age. But my subsecond rule is to ask them once, and then again, but not a third time. The reason for it is that there is hardly any point in imposing a psychological burden while attempting to relieve a social burden. If the 22-year-old is uncomfortable calling me by my first name, I won't order him to do so. At dinner with my retired headmaster, then age 80, my wife was asked to call him "Ed." Her reply was perfect: *Are you crazy?* I deeply respect, indeed love, a renowned philosopher and former professor of mine, who, if he makes it another few months, will be 100. He asked me a few years ago to call him Paul; I did, and do, but wince. XB

March 28

Dear Bill,

*I agree with you, Bill, that differ*ences in age are a valid justification for asymmetry of address: Student Joe to your Mr. Buckley. And I agree that certain older people have an aura of . . . authority? gravitas? something like that, which makes it very hard to go on a first-name basis even when invited to do so. In the case of one very distinguished Washington woman—oh heck, it's Katharine Graham—this sometimes has the perverse result that people call her "Kay" to her face, but naturally revert to "Mrs. Graham" behind her back.

The military may also be a valid exception. But (my last crack at this) what about fellow civilian adults of about the same age or older? It seems to me that symmetry should be the rule. If you're Mr. Buckley to your cleaning lady, she should be Mrs. Jones to you. But it's a lot easier all around if you're Bill and she's Betty.

March 29

Dear Michael,

You bump into yourself in your farewell sally on first names. It is logical to refer to "such as" Mrs. Graham using their surnames, even though one calls Mrs. Graham (for example) Kay to her face. What that means is that you are subconsciously affirming a difference in station (yes, that's the right word), which you don't want to, or feel the need to, be disciplined by in common discourse. And no, there is nothing at all wrong in calling the cleaning lady Joan, even if she calls you Mr. Kinsley. What's wrong is the ideological insistence on symmetry when usage cries out to reject it.

On the matter of sign-offs, I have for decades used XB, the first letter denoting more than merely routine affability, the second giving the initial of both my first and my last names. It is a mistake to design this signature closing of mine [as *Slate* has been doing] as: X, (next line) B, because that makes it look like a Valentine card; not intended, Michael, though if you would like one, I'll write it down for next Feb. 14. *XB*

—WFB

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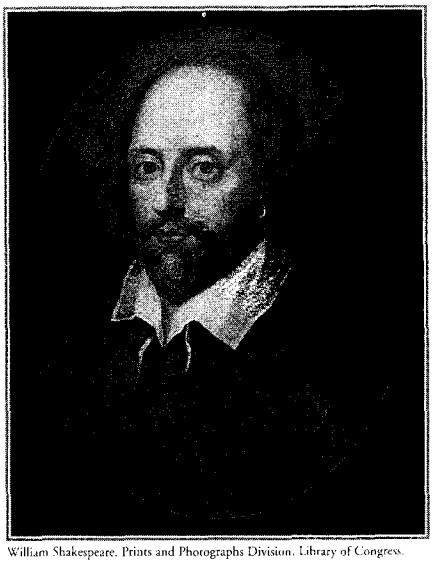

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■ THE ADMINISTRATION ■

Go, Bush!

Remarks, and advice, from a skeptic

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

NOT long ago, I was asked to give my judgment on the early days of the George W. Bush administration and throw in some advice to the new president. Perhaps the editor in question recalled my contribution to a 1989 *Wall Street Journal* symposium in which we were asked what was the best thing that had happened in the first 100 days of the elder Bush. I boldly answered, "Lent."

On this occasion, however, I shrank from glory. My open—nay, flamboyant—criticism of George W. the Candidate disqualified me, I felt, from the advice-giving racket for a while. And besides, even the most attentive administration would hardly be likely to listen to suggestions from someone who had consistently treated its leader as a good mayor of Austin in a lean year.

It did occur to me a few months ago that I might work some useful mischief and destroy the prospects of liberal Republicans by enthusiastically endorsing them for jobs in the administration. Just as I was about to call for Christie Whitman to be made head of EPA, however, she got the job. And I lost the appetite for advice-giving.

There remains, however, a slightly more subtle and interesting question: Do conservative critics of Bush not owe him some sort of apology for underestimating him? Has he not been both more commanding and more conservative than we forecast? And is not his "compassionate conservatism" the potential philosophical foundation of a new political majority?

The Bush administration has certainly begun more impressively than most observers on all sides expected. In part this is because Bush is the kind of relaxed personality who is not afraid to surround himself with such highly experienced and competent politicians as

George W. Bush by David Smith

Vice President Cheney, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, and Secretary of State Powell. The administration accordingly handled a crisis—the Hainan plane standoff—with forethought, deftness, and a disciplined self-restraint; its subsequent decision not to give Taiwan the Aegis system now, but to deliver it if Beijing increases the number of missiles aimed at Taipei, very neatly forces the Chinese to choose between avoiding escalation and taking the blame for an eventual Aegis sale. If this administration makes mistakes, they are less likely to be minor errors than serious and sustained misjudgments.

It is also a genuinely conservative administration. Of course, it is not as extravagantly conservative as the media regularly suggest. And the frequent suggestions by reporters that Bush is a calculating deceiver who disguised his cold conservatism during the campaign by being amiable to everyone merely reveal that they have a bias toward Gothic fiction as well as liberal politics. Even so, the administration has fought for a substantial tax cut (if an ill-judged one spread over too long a period); it has refused to sign the Kyoto treaty; and it has placed conservatives in senior positions throughout the administration. At the very least, Bush and his house Machiavelli, Karl Rove, appreciate that conservatives are an essential element in the Republican coalition and have to be kept reasonably content. That is a great deal more than his father ever understood.

As the current standing of Ronald Reagan demonstrates, however, the reputation of any presidency is likely to rest on the outcome of two or three major issues. In Reagan's case, these were the West's victory in the Cold War, the revival of the American economy, and the associated restoration of America's self-confidence in world affairs. Let me suggest that three issues, none of them at present in the headlines, will retrospectively determine how we judge the Bush presidency.

The first is how successfully he brings the growth of the regulatory state back under democratic control. At home and abroad, the state extends its regulatory powers in all directions. It determines our use of the environment; it lays down minute rules for workplace behavior; it seeks to regulate our lifestyles to improve our health; it affects recruitment, promotion, and remuneration in all but the smallest companies; increasingly it regulates free speech. Yet this regulatory state increasingly exempts itself from democratic control by transferring decision-making power from elected bodies to the courts, federal agencies, and international organizations. International lawyers argue that U.S. courts are bound to interpret the law in the light of even those treaties the U.S. has refused to ratify. And recent treaties like Kyoto and the Law of the Sea seek to establish bodies to regulate international economic activity. If these trends continue unchecked, then democracy, market freedom, and U.S. sovereignty will all suffer. But opposing them would be highly controversial since they are deeply entrenched in international (and especially European)

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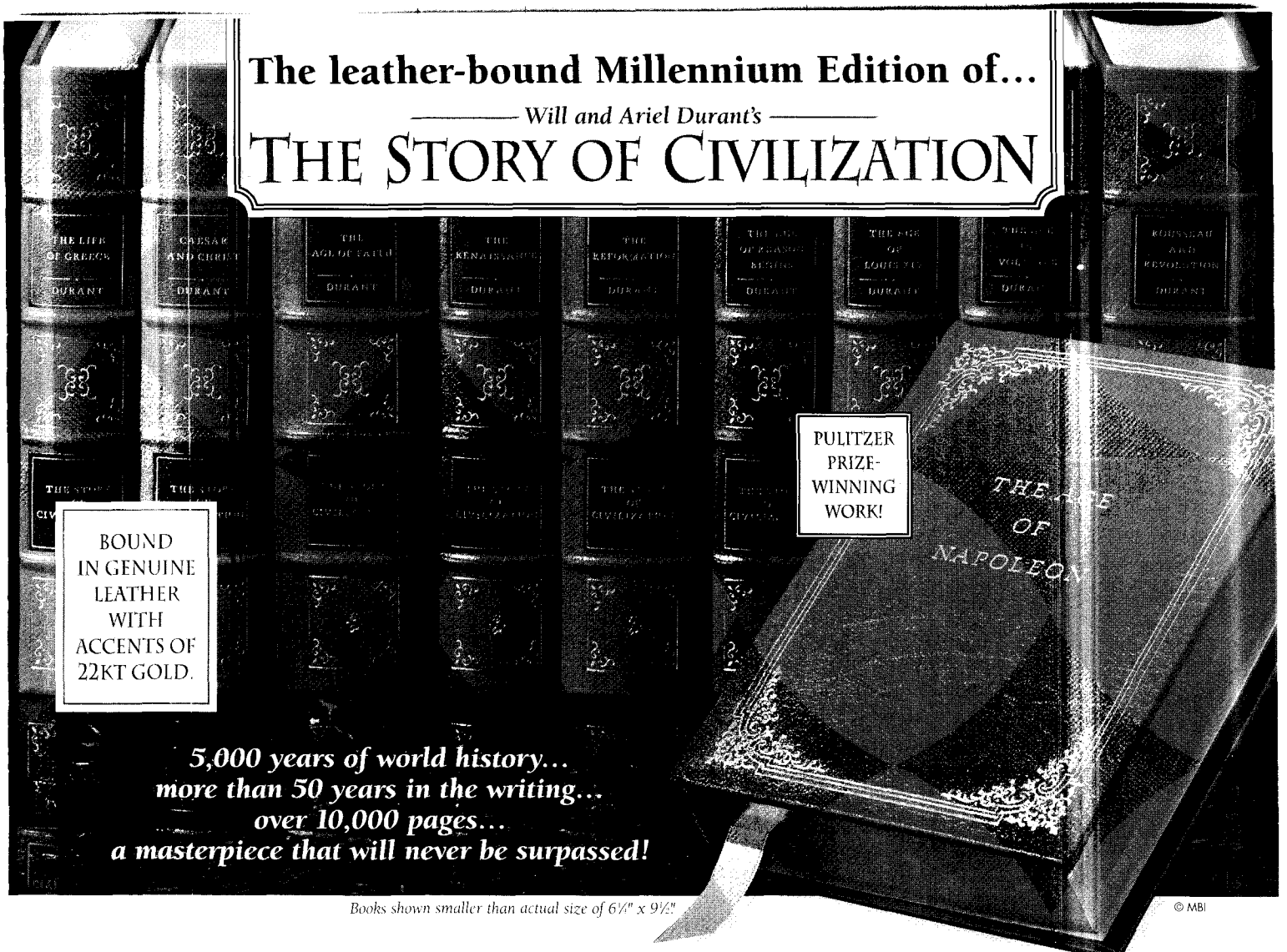
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politics. To do so, Bush must not only curb judicial power and resist the spread of international regulation, but also vigorously preach the virtues of the low-tax, low-regulation model of a free economy and demonstrate its superiority over the EU's regulated "Rhineland" model. Making his case will be an economic version of the long Cold War.

The second issue is whether Bush will be able to halt the drift towards an America balkanized into ethnic, cultural, and linguistic tribes. Perhaps it is wrong to call this a drift; it is in fact a government-enforced stampede. From the imposition of race and gender preferences in college admissions to the EEOC's campaign to inflict "language rights" in the workplace, the state is fostering a divided and difference-conscious society. The binding concept of an inclusive American identity founded on a common language and culture—though it still has the support of the great majority of Americans, including minority Americans—is regarded as oppressive by political, cultural and governmental elites. Ethnic and racial resentments are on the rise; the economy is suffering, as merit becomes less important; cynicism and a culture of lies are taking hold, as the concept of equal opportunity becomes increasingly debased.

Unfortunately, Bush may be on the wrong side of this issue. He has equivocated on racial preferences and supported bilingualism. Although his motives are doubtless honorable, the effect of his policies is the opposite of inclusionary; the longer they persist, the more they promote division in U.S. society and weaken its solidarity in the face of external challenges. And, incidentally, because difference-conscious policies intensify ethnic grievances, they help the Democratic party politically.

The third issue is whether Bush will entrench America's position as the leading world power or preside over the development of a multipolar world in which the U.S. is, at best, first among equals—and some hostile equals at that. Here a little history may be in order: America's current preoccupation with the rise of China is often compared with Britain's dilemma on how to deal with the rise of the Kaiser's Germany. In fact, the dilemma was Germany's, not Britain's. London would have been happy to maintain friendship with a Germany that confined its ambitions to the European continent; it had no choice but to resist a Germany that was plainly outbuilding the Royal Navy and seeking "a place in the sun." What the British saw clearly was that the rise of Germany compelled them to establish a firm friendship with the United States. From the 1890s onwards, they did just that, and as a result Britain and the U.S. were allies in the 20th century's two hot wars and one long cold war. On all three occasions, moreover, the British were on the winning side.

Bush should ponder this lesson. The U.S. can do little about China except to be prepared to wage peace or war as the Chinese decide. Nor can the U.S. turn for help to an exact equivalent of the U.S. to which Britain turned: NAFTA, even expanded into an hemispheric American Community, would add very little to America's clout. What the U.S. must do is ensure that it remains the unquestioned leader of a Western alliance that can outpunch any other potential alliance of great powers. That in turn means that the U.S. must discourage and, if necessary, prevent the emergence of a single European superpower with a military capacity that matches its economic power. Among the many policies to achieve this—bringing Britain and Eastern Europe into NAFTA, establishing a Trans-Atlantic Free Trade Area, offering the Europeans greater influence over the development of grand strategy—the most obvious one currently is to delay and obstruct the proposed European Rapid Reaction Force. Again, however, this is an issue on which the Bush administration's trumpet gives forth a decidedly uncertain sound; perhaps too many people are wrestling for control of the instrument.

To prevail in these three major struggles, conservatives will need leadership that is not only bold but eloquent. So far, this administration has been able to rely on Disraeli's observation that "a majority is always the best repartee." But building the majorities required to face these particular challenges will require a little eloquence first. **NR**

■ THE NATION ■

Segregation *Forever?*

Where the GOP and the Black Caucus link arms

JOHN J. MILLER

It isn't every day that GOP operatives cheer on the liberal wing of the Supreme Court. Yet many of them couldn't have been happier on April 18, when Justice Sandra Day O'Connor abandoned her longstanding skepticism about racial gerrymandering in a North Carolina redistricting dispute. The Republican National Committee now may proceed with one of its key tasks before next year's elections: encouraging state-level Republicans to pack as many blacks as possible into the smallest number of congressional districts, thus making more GOP-leaning white voters available for placement in swing districts.

This clever strategy represents perhaps the only issue on which the GOP can make—and has made—common cause with the Congressional Black Caucus. The endangered species here is the white Democrat. Some analysts even believe it wasn't President Clinton's health-care disaster or Newt Gingrich's Contract with America that led to the Republican election sweep of 1994, but the shakeout from the redistricting following the 1990 census: The number of black members of Congress shot up, and so did the number of Republicans. The results were most dramatic in the South. There, seats held by black Democrats rose from 13 to 17. At the same time, Republicans gained 27 seats, and grabbed a majority from the region for the first time since Reconstruction.

But this racial gerrymandering came under heavy fire from the Supreme Court; on several occasions, a 5–4 majority struck down oddly shaped House districts that had been config-

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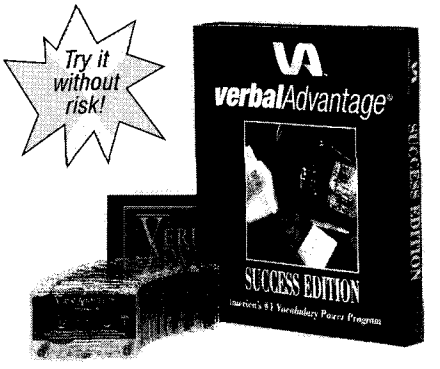

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ured for the specific purpose of creating safe seats for black politicians. With the unexpected O'Connor flip in *Easley* v. *Cromartie*, however, there is suddenly a 5–4 consensus for the opposite view: The woman who once said race-based redistricting threatened to "balkanize" the country has softened her stance. O'Connor essentially found some wiggle room for race to play a role in redistricting. The decision itself was narrow, focusing on questions of evidence, but there's no doubt Republicans will try to squeeze every advantage out of it to make sure districts are either as black or as white as they can be.

In another day, this was called "segregation." It was wrong then, and it's wrong now.

Racial gerrymandering is exactly the sort of color-conscious public policy that Republicans should fight against. In its finer moments, the GOP opposes racial preferences and set-aside contracts; it ought to declare war on race-driven redistricting as well. Justice Clarence Thomas's most eloquent opinions have been on this subject, and, in his *Easley* dissent, he reiterated his views with a forceful simplicity: "Racial gerrymandering offends the Constitution."

That line of thinking may satisfy conservatives, who normally try to elevate principles over politics—but it may not please Republicans, who don't always have time for such niceties as they cast nervous glances at the next election. Racial gerrymandering may not be something all Republicans want to support, but if it helps their interests as a party—and thereby advances the principles that motivate their politics in the first place—then perhaps, they believe, the deal is worth it.

What they don't appreciate is how much racial gerrymandering may hurt them, in a strictly political sense. Much has been written and said already about President Bush's disastrously low vote totals among blacks last November; he carried a pathetic 9 percent of these voters. Just how bad was this? Consider: Bush actually won about as many gay votes (roughly one-quarter support from 4 percent of the electorate) as black ones (nearly one-tenth support from 10 percent). If Republicans could just raise their performance among blacks nationally from the abysmal Bush level to a merely mediocre 30 percent—about where it was for Richard Nixon in 1960—they would deliver a catastrophic blow to the Democrats.

But that's a difficult thing to do when black voters rarely have a chance to see GOP candidates. In many of the "majority-minority" districts Republicans have carved out so eagerly, there is no functional Republican party. This is intentional: If some entrenched black Democrat faced anything more than a joke opponent—and many of them don't even face a Republican nominee at all—it would drive up turnout in these places. That, in turn, could damage GOP candidates at the state or national level. According to this view, it's better to forgo entirely a few seats that almost certainly can't be won, in order to get a leg up in a gubernatorial or Senate race.

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In another day, this was called 'segregation.' It was wrong then, and it's wrong now.

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But there's a pretty big downside to this approach: Millions of blacks never have the opportunity even to *consider* voting for Republicans. In a recent BAMPAC poll of black voters, 68 percent said that they had never voted for a GOP candidate—not even for the sewer commission, not even once. The figure is probably worse among young black voters, because about half of the older ones may remember supporting Dwight Eisenhower.

Racial gerrymandering threatens to make this unbelievably bad situation even worse. Before the 1990 census, fewer than 20 percent of blacks lived in House districts represented by blacks, according to David Bositis of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. After a round of redistricting in which the first Bush administration's Department of Justice cooperated with black activists to create as many majority-minority districts as possible, that rate soared to 42 percent. It has since slipped to about 36 percent, says Bositis, because the Supreme Court struck down a few of the most egregious examples of race-conscious redistricting. But he expects it to top 40 percent again soon, when current redistricting efforts are completed.

The *Easley* ruling will encourage this. "The decision says that race may be a factor in congressional redistricting, but that it can't be the predominant factor," says Don McGahn, general counsel for the National Republican Campaign Committee. That, of course, is precisely how admissions officers at colleges and universities defend racial preferences. As experience reveals, when race may be *a* factor in decision-making, it quickly becomes *the* factor. Virginia congressman Tom Davis, who heads the NRCC, will see to that: In February, he promised that the RNC would file lawsuits against any state in which Democrats try to reduce the percentage of black people living in any given House district.

Packing blacks into districts—or packing the members of any race, for that matter—is a recipe for radicalism. It guarantees the election of more politicians like Maxine Waters, and pushes the Democratic party as a whole farther to the left. Many blacks already complain that they face a glass ceiling in politics, and there's something to what they say—but white racism isn't to blame. (If it were, there would never have been a hunger for President Colin Powell.) A leading culprit is the regime of racial gerrymandering, which does not encourage the election of candidates who can build multiracial coalitions. This doesn't hurt just moderate black Democrats; it hurts black Republicans, too. There are simply fewer places where they might begin political careers.

There are dozens of reasons why Republican candidates fare poorly among blacks, and majority-minority districts are only one. Yet for all the GOP's talk about big tents, and the spectacle of multiculturalism at last summer's convention in Philadelphia, there's no substitute for the retail politics of walking through black neighborhoods and visiting black churches. As long as Republicans encourage racial gerrymandering, they'll have less of an incentive to do these things. When they finally do have an incentive, they won't have a clue what to do—and nine of every ten black voters will decide, once again, not to support the candidate from a party they don't know. **NR**

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■ PUBLIC POLICY ■

What's Up, Docs?

The Democratization of the AMA

MICHAEL CATANZARO

PRESIDENT BUSH got a great deal of media attention when he ended the American Bar Association's special role in evaluating federal judges—but a few weeks later, the press largely overlooked Bush's slap at another white-collar professional group, the American Medical Association. Bush gave his first important health-care address to the American College of Cardiologists, even though presidents traditionally reserve this speech for the AMA. The decision was occasioned principally by concern about the AMA's political tilt, which has diminished the once-revered organization's influence and damaged its reputation for protecting the interests of doctors and patients.

Many Republicans, including those at the White House, see the AMA leadership as just another Democratic party constituency. Not so long ago, the AMA was a reliable GOP ally: In 1965, the AMA stood with Republicans in denouncing Medicare as "socialized medicine," and in strongly resisting excessive regulation of health care; after a brief flirtation with President Clinton's health-care overhaul in 1993, the AMA helped Republicans crush it. But AMA leaders no longer consider the Republican party the vehicle to advance their interests; in fact, these interests now converge with those of the most liberal wing of the Democratic party.

The AMA's realignment has had consequences: The association now represents just 32 percent of American physicians, down from a peak of nearly three-fourths in the early 1970s. Much of the decline stems from the increasing specialization of medicine, which has forced doctors into specialty groups better equipped to represent them; but another important factor is the AMA's strange alliance with trial lawyers. The AMA and the American Trial Lawyers Association favor legislation permitting unlimited lawsuits against HMOs. Together, they helped defeat three GOP senators who held a different view. As a crucial member of the "Patient Access Coalition," the AMA financed television ads against Sens. Slade Gorton (Wash.), Spencer Abraham (Mich.), and John Ashcroft (Mo.), all of whom opposed the AMA on HMO liability. "Tell your senators to stand up for patients and let America's doctors make your health-care decisions—not HMO bureaucrats," the ads proclaimed.

The AMA also withdrew its support from GOP congressman Ernie Fletcher of Kentucky. In 1998, the AMA's PAC had given him the maximum $10,000 contribution—but Fletcher's contention that lawsuits would not curb HMO abuses was a heresy it couldn't overlook.

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In addition to targeting Republicans, the AMA is busy championing left-wing causes. In 1998, AMA leaders sided with the Left in opposing Washington State's Initiative 200, which proposed banning all forms of state affirmative action. The organization also recently joined the gun-control coalition known as Doctors Against Handgun Injury, and distributed a booklet on gun safety to thousands of doctors; Dr. Katherine Christoffel, one of the contributors to the booklet, has compared guns to viruses that must be eradicated. But Dr. Timothy Wheeler, president of Doctors for Responsible Gun Ownership, says that while "this campaign is couched in terms of patient safety . . . it really represents a psychological aversion to gun ownership."

The AMA is even emulating the AFL-CIO by campaigning for federal legislation to permit physicians to unionize. Some congressmen, most of them Republicans, criticized the unionization drive as merely an effort to increase physician reimbursement fees and boost AMA membership; but Tom Campbell, a California Republican, and John Conyers, a Michigan Democrat, shepherded the AMA-backed bill through the House last June. It passed by a vote of 276 to 136.

After the bill passed, AMA board member Donald Palmisano basically proved the Republican skeptics right by making the following boast in an e-mail: "The gutting amendments that would have prevented fee negotiations and would have required FTC [Federal Trade Commission] or DOJ [Department of Justice] supervision were defeated . . . Finally, we need to turn this into new membership. How can someone not join now?"

Palmisano's e-mail revealed a struggling organization, searching for relevance and the power it once enjoyed—and it only served to accentuate the mistrust Republicans have come to harbor against AMA leaders. "It used to be that when Republicans on the Hill tried to understand what doctors in their districts were thinking, they turned to the AMA," says a Republican leadership aide. "But that's totally changed. We simply don't believe what they say."

The AMA's search for renewed influence has pushed the 154-year-old organization into the crucible of managed-care reform: Bashing HMOs has become de rigueur for the AMA leadership. But while some doctors are sympathetic, much of the AMA rank and file is not. According to Jerald Schenken, who served on the AMA board from 1985 to 1994, AMA leaders have "lost their place in the front" when it comes to issues affecting doctors. "If they are to be leaders, they've got to find a way to represent American doctors."

Suing HMOs out of existence was supposed to be the AMA's return ticket to glory. But the AMA's pursuit of that goal has blinded it to issues of greater import for doctors. Take, for example, malpractice reform. According to a national survey, nearly three-fourths of physicians think trial lawyers would be the principal beneficiaries of HMO lawsuits. Nearly 9

Mr. Catanzaro is a reporter working for columnist Robert Novak.

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in 10 doctors said they supported malpractice reform. Even the AMA itself, until recently, consistently spoke out against medical liability. "Although patients, physicians, and health-care providers are most directly harmed by the present system, society as a whole is also harmed," said Dr. Joseph Painter, then AMA president, in his 1993 testimony before Congress. "The spiraling costs generated by our nation's dysfunctional liability system are borne by everyone."

Yet the AMA no longer considers medical malpractice a top priority. This year, the AMA dropped out of the Health Care Liability Alliance, which favors attaching malpractice reform to the Patients Bill of Rights. And over the past three years, AMA leaders rejected opportunities to obtain significant curbs on malpractice lawsuits. The compromise presented to them was simple: Accept restrictions on managed-care lawsuits in exchange for capping damages in malpractice cases. But the AMA's answer, to the shock of its rank and file, was no.

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The nation's oldest physicians group finds itself outside the circle of power.

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In 1998, Dennis Hastert—not yet House Speaker—chaired a managed-care task force created by Speaker Newt Gingrich. Hastert's panel produced a bill that did not permit lawsuits, but instead allowed patients to participate in internal and external appeals processes if they were denied care. That bill passed the House in July 1998, without the AMA's support. The AMA supported instead a bill sponsored by John Dingell of Michigan, under which patients could bypass appeals—and go directly to court—just by alleging harm. Dingell's bill permitted patients to sue in federal and state courts simultaneously, and was biased toward action in state courts—where trial lawyers and juries dominate.

The AMA's refusal to compromise infuriated Hastert. "These guys [AMA leaders] are—as far as I'm concerned—toadies of the Democrats," he complained in August 1998. Even Georgia Republican Charlie Norwood, who later cosponsored Dingell's bill (and just recently took his name off the bill in deference to President Bush), was indignant. "Frankly, I find it unbelievable," he said. "It's almost as if they don't know how to win."

Over the next two years, Hastert continued to work on malpractice reform, but was rebuffed by AMA leaders. The Dingell-Norwood bill (now called the Ganske-Dingell bill) passed the House in 1999, with 68 Republican votes. The Senate, led by majority whip Don Nickles, passed its own version; the House-Senate conference on the bill deadlocked for most of 2000. Nickles, who chaired the conference, adamantly opposed new lawsuits, but eventually accepted a compromise. The AMA, however, refused to budge.

In September 2000, Hastert asked the AMA's board members and Washington lobbyists to submit compromise language. "At that point, everyone thought we had reached a deal," says congressman Dave Hobson, an Ohio Republican and a member of Hastert's task force. But incredibly, a month later, the AMA simply sent Hastert another draft of Dingell-Norwood. Nickles was furious. "The AMA leadership leaves something to be desired," he said pointedly.

The AMA's single-minded drive for HMO lawsuits has long-term consequences. Former AMA president Dr. Daniel "Stormy" Johnson defends the organization he served for 19 years—but is concerned about the AMA's "not striking the proper balance on the Patients Bill of Rights." He finds it "distressing" that the AMA has alienated its "natural allies" in the business community.

The AMA spent nearly $18 million on lobbying last year, but the organization has little to show for it. America's doctors also have failed to reap much benefit. "That's the great irony here," says Mark Merritt, chief strategist for the American Association of Health Plans. "Malpractice reform should be at the center of the health-care debate, but it's not—because it was pushed aside by trial lawyers." In the AMA's world, trial lawyers and gun control predominate; like the American Bar Association, the nation's oldest physicians group finds itself outside the circle of power, desperately searching for a way back in. **NR**

■ **WORLD HEALTH POLICY** ■

A Case of the DDTs

The war against the war against malaria

ROGER BATE

MILITANTS from Greenpeace have been mounting protests in an effort to close down the only major DDT-production facility in the world, located in Cochin, India. The protesters won't be getting any support from Jocchonia Gumede, a domestic servant in Johannesburg, South Africa: In the past two years, six of Jocchonia's close relatives have died from malaria. His family lives in northern KwaZulu Natal, where malaria has always been endemic—Jocchonia himself contracted it twice while growing up—and DDT is simply the cheapest and most effective way to combat this dread disease.

Malaria is now on the increase, not just in Africa but in all tropical regions of the planet. It afflicted well over 300 million people last year, and killed over 1 million. Prof. Wen Kilama of the African Malaria Vaccine Testing Network in Tanzania characterizes the death toll as "equivalent to crashing seven jumbo jets filled with children every day."

That's a devastating human cost. And it has far-reaching consequences, beyond even the sad plight of the sufferers and the huge burden the disease imposes on health resources. In many countries, the disease is also clouding the long-term economic future: When people are unable to work effectively because of illness, productivity suffers—and this, in turn, scares away investors. Professor Jeffrey

Mr. Bate is a director of Africa Fighting Malaria, a South African humanitarian group, and an adjunct fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute. His coauthored paper, "When Politics Kills," is published on www.fightingmalaria.org.

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Sachs of the Harvard Center for International Development estimates that every year, malaria destroys around 1 percent of the wealth—not just income, but *total wealth*—of Africa.

Given such devastating human and economic costs, one might expect the "international community" to be fighting malaria with all its might. But the chief effort of the world's politicians has been to try to force developing countries to abandon their best weapon in the fight against malaria—the pesticide dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, known commonly as DDT. The United Nations is actually promoting a treaty that might ban the use of DDT globally—and on April 18, President Bush agreed to sign the treaty.

This is absurd, because DDT is the proven solution to malaria. Today malaria is a tropical disease, but until the 1920s it was endemic all over Europe and America. Epidemics were found as far north as Archangel in the Russian Arctic Circle, and occurred regularly in Holland and England. After World War II, Europe and North America eradicated it with DDT. The pesticide saved countless millions of lives by killing the malarial mosquito, but it never had complete success in some of the world's poorer countries, because their governments lacked the capacity to implement the necessary spraying programs and removal of mosquito breeding areas; without the appropriate medical and organizational ability, even the best sprays won't be effective in eradicating a disease. Then, in the late 1960s, environmentalists started to complain about DDT, and it was removed from the malaria-control program in many countries; some 20 countries—most in Africa—continued to use it.

According to Donald Roberts, a professor of tropical public health at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, the huge drop in the number of houses sprayed with DDT has had severe consequences: From the mid 1980s to the mid 1990s, Latin America experienced an annual increase of more than 1.8 million malaria cases (more than 4.8 per 1,000 people)—and the rate has continued to grow since 1996. Ecuador, however, continued to use DDT, and its malaria rate *fell* over the period 1988–97.

Other mosquito-borne diseases are also on the rise. Until the 1970s, DDT was used to eradicate the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito from most tropical regions of the Americas. A new invasion of *Aedes aegypti* has since brought devastating outbreaks of dengue fever and a renewed threat of urban yellow fever. Roberts says the international anti-DDT groups, with what he calls their "high-pressure tactics," bear some responsibility for this public-health disaster.

■

The huge drop in the number of houses sprayed with DDT has had severe consequences.

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About 40 years ago, suspicions about DDT—inspired by Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring*—sparked the first green crusade. When it was used in vast quantities in agriculture, DDT probably did harm reproduction in birds of prey. (This harm subsequently proved reversible.) But after decades of research, there is not one replicated study that shows any harm to human beings at all. Furthermore, DDT is now only sprayed inside houses. Dr. Amir Attaran, a researcher at Harvard's Center for International Development, estimates that the amount of DDT used to spray a few acres of cotton in America in the early 1960s would be enough to spray all the homes in Guyana of those at risk of malaria. Such indoor spraying, he concludes, would have "negligible impacts on the environment." Even Green presidential nominee Ralph Nader has come out in favor of DDT use.

Undeterred, Greenpeace continues to try to shut down the Indian DDT factory—and, in effect, to prevent some of the world's poorest countries from using the least expensive method of eradicating malaria. A few months ago, the Indian government gave an assurance to Greenpeace that production would cease in 2005—but officials of that country's anti-malaria program, which has used DDT since 1953, objected to this commitment; the government may make an embarrassing but felicitous U-turn. (There is precedent for such a switch. In 1996, South Africa stopped using DDT, and the death rate from malaria rose by around 1,000 percent. In

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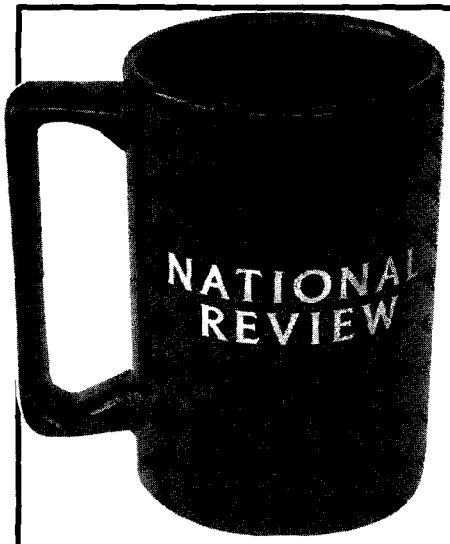
desperation, the country has returned to using the pesticide.)

There are other pesticides that work against malaria, but they are at least twice—and sometimes up to 20 times—as expensive, and none is as effective a repellent. These substitutes are less persistent than DDT—they don't linger in the environment as long—and this is what makes them so attractive to the greens. But when you are using pesticides indoors, a persistent material is better: It means you might have to spray only once a year—and to a poor country, this kind of cost consideration could make all the difference.

Despite these basic facts of science and economics, international-pesticide-treaty negotiators decided last December to restrict the use of DDT. Their decision is not final; they will meet again in Sweden in May, when environmental ministers are expected to sign a final text. It may get worse between now and then; the negotiators may yet decide to replace the restrictions with an outright ban. But even the restrictions demanded under the existing draft will be onerous for the poorest countries, some of which have health budgets of less than $5 per person per year (rich countries spend well over 400 times this amount on health care). Even worse, many countries have been coming under pressure from international health and environment agencies to give up DDT or face losing aid grants: Belize and Bolivia are on record admitting they gave in to pressure on this issue from the U.S. Agency for International Development.

South Africa has asked for an exemption from the DDT restrictions. Jocchonia Gumede reports that the number of mosquitoes is down since DDT was reintroduced in February 2000. He is cautiously optimistic that the situation will improve, but his quick smile belies the anguish that he feels. Jocchonia was not aware of the reason for the removal of DDT, nor is he aware of the debate surrounding whether to ban the substance outright. He is simply one of countless millions around the world whose health and prosperity depend, ominously, on sensible decision-making by global bureaucrats. **NR**



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■ CULTURE WATCH ■

(War) Toy Story

Where have you gone, G.I. Joe?

ANDREW STUTTAFORD

To Harvard psychologist Carol Gilligan, it is the moment of crisis, the turning point when it all starts to go wrong: "You see this picture of a little boy with a stuffed bunny in one hand and a Lego gun in the other." Society, she argues, will push the tot to drop the rabbit, and this, she believes, is a tragedy, a brutal suppression of the sensitive man-child within. It is for insights such as these that Jane Fonda has just awarded Harvard $12.5 million, endowing a chair in Gilligan's name.

That's very fortunate for Gilligan, because my nephew, Oliver, would be unlikely to give her the time of day. Sitting amid the debris of last Christmas's festivities, the 6-year-old had a Seventh Cavalry revolver in his hand, a newly unwrapped Sherman tank at his feet, and, doubtless, dreams of battle on his mind. "This," he said, "is heaven." He was celebrating the season of peace and goodwill in an appropriately martial style, something difficult in his native England—a country where toy armies are in retreat and cowboys have to be armed with sticks.

Fortunately for Oliver, his uncle could help. In the finest tradition of the Atlantic convoys, I was able to come to the rescue with weaponry from across the ocean. The revolver came from the shop attached to the NRA's National Firearms Museum in Virginia (take your children!), and the tank from Toys "R" Us, a store that can usually boast at least one aisle where it is always 1944. It's all there: the armor, the artillery, and the

Mr. Stuttaford, a freelance writer in New York, is a frequent contributor to NR.

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dedicated, handpicked troops, including, of course, G.I. Joe, back now in uniform, after a post-Vietnam hiatus in which the poor fellow was shamefully repackaged as an "adventurer."

All, however, is not yet well in Toyland. In the more upscale FAO Schwarz, for example, it is still 1968. To be fair, if you look hard enough you can still find G.I. Joe and his friends, but they make up a small, desperate platoon, holed up in a last redoubt, lacking air cover and surrounded by Teletubbies, victims of our elite's continuing anxiety over the allegedly pernicious impact of plastic garrisons and battery-powered combat. (Even Toys "R" Us is not entirely safe: Every December, demonstrators picket selected outlets of this toy-town Krupp, calling for the withdrawal of the playthings of mass destruction.)

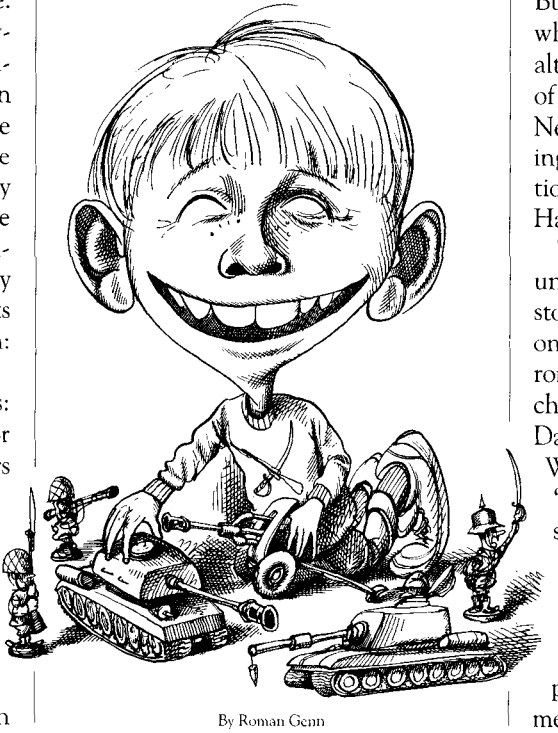
We all know the sort of households where such concerns prevail. They tend to be grim places, where chocolate is rationed, bread is bran, and the preferred entertainment is PBS. Permitted toys are dully educational, preferably Swedish, and, ideally, made out of (non-endangered) wood. To these folks, war toys are the NASCAR of the nursery: déclassé, disreputable, and more than a little dangerous.

Such attitudes are rooted primarily in snobbery and the vague and sentimental pacifism that permeates this culture. They have been around for a long time. Opposition to military toys has, however, been given fresh impetus by Gilligan-style educational theorizing and its even uglier sister, fear and loathing of the exuberant male child. These ideas are nonsense, but they have been skillfully publicized and are now increasingly the stuff of schoolroom orthodoxy. Inevitably, the success of such theories may lead anxious and well-meaning parents to ask themselves the terrible question: Should Joe go?

To which the appropriate response is: Hell, no. It is not possible to say this for all war toys, but—contrary to the fears of many parents—toy soldiers are a constructive, not destructive, force. They encourage cooperative playing even if the form that cooperation takes—the arrangement of mock slaughter and atrocity—is not one that will bring joy to the heart of Kofi Annan; but as a spur to the imagination and a launch pad for creative thought, these toys are incomparable. These plastic warriors may be heavily armed, but there is not much they can do for themselves. In the era of PlayStation, they are a magnificent anachronism: The only programs they come with are in the heads of their owners.

What's more, the fact that these soldiers are drawn from the real past brings its own educational advantages. Sci-fi action figures are all very well, but the knowledge they encourage relates to Krypton, the Klingons, or the lore of the Jedi. Toy soldiers are, literally, more down-to-earth: They tell the story of what has happened on *this* planet. Detachments, say, of Union cavalry or World War I infantrymen are not much fun without some knowledge of the conflicts in which they fought. In an age in which history is taught as an afterthought—or, worse, a P.C. seminar—this is an incentive for children, and particularly boys, to turn to the real thing, glorious, bloody, confused, exhilarating, and endlessly fascinating.

And no, Mom, it will not turn them into killers. To judge by much of today's conventional wisdom, it is only a short step from the Hasbro tank to the Columbine library, a view that reflects the feminist prejudice that the entire male sex is mad, bad, and dangerous to know. Certainly, masculine aggression is a fact of life (I should know, I grew up with two brothers), but it is not a disease or nasty pathology that needs to be treated, repressed, or medicated away. Correctly channeled (and, yes, toy soldiers can be part of this process), it can be a powerful positive force. Hand in hand with associated characteristics such as competitiveness, assertiveness, and a willingness to take risks, it can be a great engine for a boy's development.



By Roman Genn

Attempts to suppress it are, moreover, doomed to fail. You might as well tell a tree not to grow leaves. Such efforts may be worse than useless: Children generally take great pleasure in doing the opposite of what they are told. I remember, still with some fear, two childhood acquaintances from a household where war toys were strictly forbidden. Before any visit there, my Tommy Gunn (a British equivalent of G.I. Joe) had to disarm. He could be a fireman, but never a commando. Unfortunately for me, however, the family's creed of nonviolence did not always extend to playroom behavior. In the end, naturally, both boys became career soldiers. That's merely ironic; but it is not difficult to imagine similar rebellions taking other, darker forms.

Instead of denying and deforming a small boy's aggressive energy, it would be better to acknowledge and direct it. Another topic must not be ignored: fun. But when it comes to that subject, those who are recommending "nonviolent" alternatives seem to be clueless. The list of suggestions posted on the web by one New Mexico counselor includes "building blocks, crayons, scissors, construction paper, hand puppets, and puzzles." Hand puppets?

This is not to say that there are no undesirably violent toys. Visit any toy store and you will see some lurking there on the shelves. In a secure family environment, I doubt if they would do any child much harm, although the Diamond Dallas Page interactive figurine (one of a World Champion Wrestling series of "Bashin' Brawlers") could certainly be said to be delivering a rather unattractive message to the nation's young: "Punch his gut, and he yells. Grab his nose, and he yelps. Pile drive his head, and he screams." Better than a hand puppet, to be sure, but grim stuff. Give me—and the kids—G.I. Joe. **NR**

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■ CULTURE WATCH II ■

Slip on *This*

How George W. avoids the banana peel

ROB LONG

CHARLIE CHAPLIN once explained that there are two ways to film the old guy-slips-on-a-banana-peel joke. The first, unfunny, way goes like this: Cut to the guy walking, oblivious. Cut to the banana peel, lying in wait. Cut to a wide shot of the guy approaching the banana peel. Cut to a closeup of the banana peel, just as the guy's foot hits it. Cut back to the wide shot, as the guy slips on the peel and lands on his rear end, which, as everyone knows from cartoons, is the funniest part of the human body and one that registers no real pain.

The second, funny, way to film that same sequence is as follows: Cut to the guy, walking. Cut to the banana peel, lying in wait. Cut to a wide shot of the guy approaching the banana peel. Cut to a closeup of the banana peel, just as the guy's foot *almost* hits it. Cut back to the wide shot, as the guy deftly steps over the banana peel, smiling smugly . . . and falls into an open manhole.

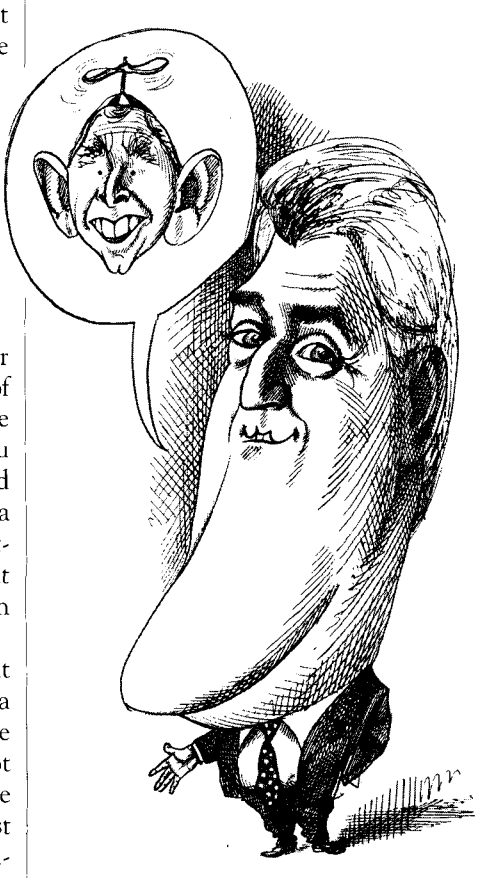
Get the difference?

Being funny, like being married or being president, is really just a matter of managing expectations. You make people *expect* you to slip on the banana peel. You lead them, through selective takes and camera work, to connect the dots just a few seconds ahead of the action. You flatter them, ultimately, into assuming that they've got it all figured out. And then you fall into an open manhole.

So let us stipulate, at the outset, that former vice president Dan Quayle is a man of average to slightly above-average mental capacity. He's probably a lot smarter than that, of course, but for the purposes of our discussion here, let's just leave it at "average." Let us further stipulate that President George W. Bush is also a man of average to slightly above-average mental capacity. Both, though, have slightly lower reputations in the smarts department.

Quayle attacked the problem in the most obviously logical way: He acted smart, gave smart speeches, stopped smiling so much, and in general tried to button up his persona. But there's only so much you can do to burnish your image when you're vice president of the United States. And the true effect of all of that image enhancement isn't to drain the funny out of the joke, it's to make it even funnier. What's funnier than a dumb guy trying to act smart? Imagine that, when you cut to the guy walking down the street, he's walking beside a pretty girl, trying to act cool and together. He's dressed up and acting suave and maybe acting a little tough, maybe showing off a little. Then he slips on a banana peel. You don't even need the open manhole. It stops being a joke about a guy and a banana peel, and instead becomes a joke about a guy pretending to be someone he's not.

I think it's fair to say of George W. Bush that although he's talented in many ways, he is incapable of pretending to be someone he's not. Aware of his own tendency to Cuisinart the English language, when he's got something important to say, he says it with index cards. When thoroughly rehearsed, he gives a good speech, but his teleprompter style is strictly phonetic—the words come out clearly, but the inflection is a little weird at times, and the line breaks come whenever the screen, or the index cards, need to go to the next page, sort of like: "We have communicated to the Chinese. Government and have expressed our desire. To see our servicemen and women return. With our aircraft to their families." I imagine that these are the sort of speeches a President e. e. cummings might make.



The prez as conceived by Jay Leno? by Roman Genn

On the other hand, Bush is *not* setting himself up for a banana-peel experience. At the recent Radio and Television Correspondents Dinner in Washington, Bush did a killer 15-minute recitation of his most absurd statements—most read *directly* from a recently published political-attack book—and brought down the house. He really didn't add much extra material, either. He just walked up to the lectern, opened the book, read it out loud to his audience, threw in a few deadpan glances, and that was that. It was a neat example of efficient time management: Why bother coming up with new material when some liberal joke-book author has already written your speech for you?

It's not that you can't make fun of a guy who makes fun of himself, it's just that you have to come up with different reasons to make fun of him. Even now, barely four months into his presidency, the dumb-guy jokes about Bush seem pretty lame. For months, liberals have been setting themselves up for a fall: "Watch this guy slip on the banana," they've been crowing, "Watch this guy land on his butt." Since last autumn, liberals have been marching down the street announcing the arrival of the village idiot—"This is going to be so funny! Watch the fool be funny!" And they cheered so hard and shouted so loud, they completely missed the open manhole. Which is where they are now.

But not for long. If you can't make fun of a guy, then you must demonize him. So look, in the coming months, for "Bush the Impaler" and "Bush the Destroyer" themes to emerge from the liberal gaggle. (Barbra Streisand, always ahead of the

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curve, has already proclaimed him "destructive.") This is to be encouraged. One of the reasons Clinton skated so easily through his troubles was the ferocious and over-the-top hatred he engendered in his antagonists. And it's almost impossible to demonize a man you've already convinced yourself is an impotent fool—the effect is merely to drown out your true objections. Recall that during the Reagan years, liberals wanted us to believe two contradictory things. First, that Reagan was a sleepyheaded dunce who didn't have a thought in his head; and second, that he was well aware that a Defense Department procurement for weapons to be sold through Middle East arms dealers to Iran would generate a profit that could be diverted through an offshore shell corporation to another shell corporation controlled by a group friendly to the Nicaraguan contras. Liberals are still slipping on that particular banana peel.

■

It's almost impossible to demonize a man you've already convinced yourself is an impotent fool.

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So if making fun of George Bush isn't where the money is, where, then, is it? Comedy Central's new quasi-political offering, *That's My Bush*, provides one answer. The show has been billed as an outrageous satire—and it *is* outrageous, to the point of being not very funny—but it isn't really political. The conceit is kind of hard to swallow: George and Laura Bush (and, oddly, Karl Rove), in addition to serving their country in government, also serve their country as stars of their own sitcom. The result is uneven—but it isn't even remotely "liberal." The true joke here is the tired format of the sitcom. One episode trots out the old two-dates-on-one-night plot. George has promised Laura a romantic dinner for two, but he's also arranged a peacemaking dinner between abortion foes and abortion supporters. So he dashes back and forth between the two rooms, in a send-up of the most exhausted of sitcom clichés. At the end, though, when all is revealed and George and Laura are arguing about which of them is at fault, George says that maybe they both have a good point. And Laura responds, "Kind of like the abortion question." Which strikes me as the first time on American television that anyone—even in jest—has acknowledged that, with regard to abortion, *both* sides have a point. The show isn't conservative, of course—this is still America, this is still American television—but it certainly isn't an attack show, either. The show basically ignores politics to make fun of the last true faith of our contemporary culture: television.

For my money, the funniest show on TV is Comedy Central's *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart. Consistently hilarious, consistently outrageous—and with the liberal whining kept to an absolute minimum—the show's true target is the news media. In highly clever ways, it skewers the high priests of American culture, TV news personalities. And television news—actually, the news media in general—are ripe for the picking: pompous, self-important, smug. You couldn't ask for a better cast of characters to set up for the banana-peel/open-manhole joke. I mean, if you're looking for someone to make fun of, don't pick the guy who's already let the air out of himself. Pick someone still bursting with hot gas.

That is, as it were, a no-brainer. **NR**

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"Address of the President to the Joint Session Of Congress"

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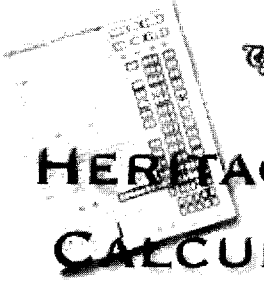

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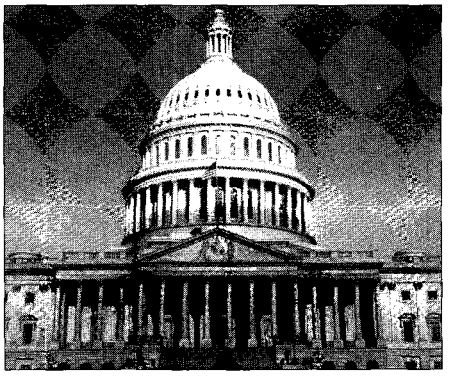
So Who's Afraid of a Deficit?

Economic sense in an age of superstition

ALAN REYNOLDS

THE Bush economic plan will help the economy, but the way the administration is selling it risks doing serious harm. Probably the most important element of the Bush plan is the proposed reduction in marginal tax rates. These cuts account for just 31 percent of the $1.6 trillion revenue cost of the entire Bush program, but GOP publicists keep stressing the huge $1.6 trillion figure instead of the relatively inexpensive—but economically crucial—marginal-rate cuts.

Why has the administration downplayed one of its most valuable initiatives, one that would strengthen the economy for years to come? What accounts for this miscalculation? The answer is to be found in psychology: an irrational fear of budget deficits and an equally irrational obsession with chronic surpluses—that is, an obsession with overtaxing Smith for no reason except to buy back Treasury bonds owned by Jones. The Republican party has hamstrung itself with meaningless economic slogans that sanctify perpetual budget surpluses. Some have even maintained this reverent attitude toward surpluses while simultaneously entertaining the contradictory hunch that any crackpot rebate scheme that wastes a lot of money is equivalent to serious tax reform as a "fiscal stimulus."



THE PERILS OF DEFICIT PARANOIA

The current political correctness of perpetual budget surpluses originated in the Clinton Democrats' unusual embrace of the archaic ideology of Eisenhower Republicans. President Clinton never stopped telling us that the 3.9 percent annual growth of the economy from 1993 to 2000 was vastly superior to the 4 percent annual growth from 1983 to 1990, solely because the '80s were a period of deficits. But what is it, exactly, that is so wonderful about budget surpluses?

Over the past 15 years, prominent macroeconomists promised that switching from budget deficits to surpluses would result in several miracles. Taking more money from taxpayers and giving it to the IRS was supposed to *raise the national savings rate* and thereby *push real interest rates lower*. That, in turn, would supposedly rid us of the evil "twin deficits"—because the *trade* deficit was sure to vanish as soon as budget deficits receded. These predictions were based on an Eisenhower-era variant of Keynesian reasoning, and they were thoroughly bipartisan. In 1987, future Clinton Treasury secretary Larry Summers wrote that "changes in the government's fiscal posture are the most potent and reliable way to increase national savings . . . It may be necessary for the federal government to run chronic budget surpluses in coming years." In 1995, former Reagan adviser Martin Feldstein argued that "with a lower level of current and expected future government borrowing, real interest rates would decline and the dollar would come down with them. . . . A lower budget deficit would thus reduce our trade deficit."

Not one of these bold promises and predictions came true. National savings did *not* rise, real interest rates did *not* fall, and the trade deficit became *much larger* rather than smaller. Consider the facts:

- The national savings rate averaged 17.4 percent of GDP from 1993 to 2000, down slightly from 17.6 percent in 1983–90, as the budget swung from deficit to surplus. Even with growing surpluses in 1998–2000, combined public and private saving was still no greater than it had been in 1984–85, when budget deficits were 5 percent of GDP.
- The real prime interest rate, after subtracting inflation, averaged 6.7 percent from 1997 to 2000, up from 6.2 percent from 1985 to 1989. Real interest rates are always lowest in recessions and highest when the economy is strong—because the real return on borrowed funds is most promising when the economy is healthy, and the Fed raises rates when the economy is booming and lowers rates during slumps.
- From 1993 to 2000, as economic expansion moved the budget from deficit into surplus, the current account deficit grew steadily larger, topping 4 percent of GDP by 2000.

The promises and predictions of Keynesian economists who advocated chronic budget surpluses in the years 1987–95 have now been thoroughly tested—and disproved. Remarkably, however, the theology that perpetuation of budget surpluses must have "the highest priority" outlived the discredited economic fallacies that spawned it. Fed chairman Alan Greenspan, for example, continues to testify solemnly that budget surpluses boost national savings and hold down real interest rates. (Tell it to Japan, where the budget deficit

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It is Time for the Federal Government to Provide Safe Access to Medical Marijuana

The Facts Are In:

- In March 1999, the **National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine** concluded "there are some limited circumstances in which we recommend smoking marijuana for medical purposes." The report noted, "Nausea, appetite loss, pain and anxiety ... all can be mitigated by marijuana." Janet E. Joy, Stanley J. Watson, Jr., and John A Benson, Jr., "Marijuana and Medicine: Assessing the Science Base," Division of Neuroscience and Behavioral Research, Institute of Medicine (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1999).
- "Federal authorities should rescind their prohibition of the medicinal use of marijuana for seriously ill patients and allow physicians to decide which patients to treat." Editorial, ***New England Journal of Medicine***, January 30, 1997.
- Among the organizations that have endorsed medical access to marijuana are: American Academy of Family Physicians; American Bar Association; American Public Health Association; American Society of Addiction Medicine; AIDS Action Council; British Medical Association; California Academy of Family Physicians; California Medical Association; California-Pacific Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church; *Consumer Reports* Magazine; Institute of Medicine; Kaiser Permanente; Lymphoma Foundation of America; Multiple Sclerosis California Action Network; National Association of Attorneys General; National Association of People with AIDS; National Nurses Society on Addictions; New Mexico Nurses Association.

The Public Has Spoken:

- Between 1996 and 2000, seven states passed voter initiatives legalizing the medicinal use of cannabis (AZ, CA, ME, OR, WA, NV and AK). These states encompass 20 percent of the population.
- Every time US citizens have voted on medical marijuana they have voted for medical marijuana; support has ranged from 54 to 65 percent.
- A nationwide Gallup poll taken on March 19-21, 1999, found that 73% of American adults are for "making marijuana legally available for doctors to prescribe in order to reduce pain and suffering."

The federal government should stop treating seriously ill Americans as criminals.

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info@csdp.org *** 703-354-9050 *** ***www.csdp.org***
For the facts on medical marijuana and other drug issues visit ***www.drugwarfacts.org***

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is 6 percent of GDP but interest rates have long been near zero simply because the economy is going nowhere.)

The hoax that surpluses reduce real interest rates made it possible to turn Keynesianism on its head, and assert that balancing the U.S. budget was the cause (rather than the consequence) of the 1996–2000 technology boomlet. Yet the same Democrats who claimed surpluses were the cause of prosperity in the Clinton years now claim the economy needs the "fiscal stimulus" of a $60–85 billion one-time "rebate" (i.e., silly little checks distributed randomly and written at the expense of the upper-income taxpayers funding the surplus). Surpluses stimulate economic growth, yet smaller surpluses stimulate even more?

In reality, budget deficits and surpluses have no reliable connection with economic growth, real interest rates, trade balances, inflation, or anything else of practical importance. The awkward reality that deficits and surpluses explain *nothing* has always encouraged Keynesian theorists to say deficits and surpluses explain *everything*. If the economy slumps, that is said to be because budget deficits crowd out investment. If the economy booms, that is because deficits stimulate demand. If the dollar goes up, that is because deficits attract foreign investment. If the dollar goes down, that is because deficits create fears of inflation. If prices go up, that is because deficits are inflationary. If prices go down, as in Japan, that is because the deficit is not large enough. Keynesian answers are always the same; only the questions change.

In reality, government borrowing is no different from any other sort of borrowing. Nobody assumes there is anything inherently imprudent or sinful about home mortgages or corporate bonds, yet many are eager to concoct higher standards for government bonds. For governments, as for households and firms, it makes sense to borrow to acquire assets that yield benefits over many years, and to borrow during tough times. If the government could literally never borrow a dollar, tax rates would always have to be increased during recessions. Sensible taxpayers would then try to realize most income during prosperous years, which would worsen the cyclical ups and downs. Borrowing during recessions, whether by consumers or governments, can smooth things out a bit. Hard times are rarely the best times to be paying off old debts.

If the economy performs poorly, the government's budget will suffer along with the budgets of taxpayers. If the economy performs well, the budget will too. We cannot possibly evaluate the benefit of lower tax rates merely by their static effects on the budget, because the *actual* effect depends on the effects of lower tax rates on the economy. Whenever the *tax future* looks brighter, however, that improves the economy and the stock market *immediately*, by lifting expectations about future opportunities. As a side benefit, an improved economy and stock market happen to be enormously helpful to the government's budget.

THE GOP AT RISK

Politicians often have a hard time believing that good economics is also good politics. Republican politicians, in particular, have often been easily intimidated by the notion that those who pay the most in taxes are least deserving of tax relief. As a result, Republicans have worked especially hard since 1981 to exempt lower incomes from the income tax—by enlarging personal exemptions and the earned income tax credit, and by promoting and enlarging the child tax credit. This is fine as far as it goes, yet it may have unanticipated consequences: If Democrats grab every chance to raise tax rates on high incomes, while Republicans repeatedly settle for reducing only the lowest tax rates on the lowest incomes, the effect must be to make the tax code progressively more "progressive"—that is, more punitive toward extraordinary effort and success.

Exempting more and more taxpayers from the income tax also shrinks the political constituency most likely to support restraint on taxes and spending. Opinion polls rarely show a majority being terribly concerned about high tax rates—largely because the majority now pays either no income tax at all, or a gentle 15 percent rate on the fraction of their income above the phased-out exemptions, deductions, and credits. By contrast, only 6.1 percent of individual returns in 1998 reported incomes above $100,000—but that tiny group bore nearly 58 percent of the burden.

But the politics are somewhat more complicated than this. Those who pay little or no income tax, for example, are literally indifferent to the issue. That means they will not be swayed by such pandering as $300 rebate checks or a 10 percent rate on the first $12,000 of income. What they do care about is *how the economy performs*. Many people of temporarily modest means, particularly the ambitious young, are far more aware than most politicians that lower marginal tax rates (on "the rich") have *always* been followed by better job opportunities and more valuable pensions for everyone.

Furthermore, those facing tax brackets of 28 and 39.6 percent are far more likely than non-taxpayers to be politically agitated by what the administration and Congress do about high tax rates. The percentage of tax returns affected by tax rates of 28 percent and higher jumped to more than 44 percent this year, by my estimate, up from fewer than 36 percent in 1993. And the percentage of *voters* directly affected by higher tax rates is higher than the percentage of tax *returns*—because two-earner households and small businesses are commonly reported on a single tax return with one high income, and because those with higher incomes are far likelier to vote. At least half of likely voters have probably been shoved into the top four tax brackets by now. In major metropolitan areas, where incomes look higher because the cost of living is higher, voters affected by the top four tax rates constitute an overwhelming majority. These people will be acutely aware of the Bush administration's success or failure in rolling back marginal tax rates.

If tax rates were brought down to 25–33 percent this year or next, Republicans could grab the credit. Democrats understand this, and that's why they have been willing to say and do almost anything to obstruct the one change they fear most: a prompt and permanent rate reduction in the higher tax brackets. The swing voters could very well swing to the GOP—if only Republicans would stop overtaxing them for the sake of the discredited sacred cow known as the federal surplus. **NR**

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China Trade—Without Guilt

It is logical, moral, and right

RICHARD LOWRY

IT'S quite an accomplishment to do the bidding of U.S. corporations and accept Marxist premises at the very same time. But this is the nifty trick pulled off by advocates of free trade with China, at least according to their critics. Congress will vote again this summer on granting "normal trade relations" to China. Passage of NTR seems all but certain. But, especially in light of China's recent eleven-day experiment in taking U.S. servicemen hostage, the trade vote will be the object of kitchen-sink criticism from left and right, alleging that corporations bought the vote with soft-money donations, that it is an expression of a crude economic determinism, even that it represents an act of "appeasement" worthy of Neville Chamberlain at his Hitler-coddling worst.

China trade risks becoming the least reputable measure to win wide congressional support since the bankruptcy bill (which passed the Senate in March by a 85–15 vote, but is still portrayed as a practically medieval effort to bleed the poor). This is a shame. Trade with China has self-interested, and not particularly subtle or savory, backers in the business community. But this says nothing about the merits of the free-trade measures in question. Economic engagement with China serves to foster pockets of liberty in China, and possibly to undermine its regime at its roots. What critics—a collection of union protectionists and human-rights advocates on the left and economic nationalists and neoconservative defense hawks on the right—offer in its stead is a policy of economic isolation that has failed elsewhere, and would be applied to China mostly as a matter of moral dudgeon: irritable gesture masquerading as strategy.

The China-trade debate features a parade of initials. For more than a decade, China was granted "most favored nation" (MFN) status after an annual debate on Capitol Hill. Last year, the MFN debate became the NTR debate, in a change of nomenclature to reflect the fact that "favored" trade status is enjoyed by almost all nations in the world and therefore is more appropriately called "normal." Meanwhile, China has moved closer to joining the World Trade Organization (WTO). Members of the WTO aren't permitted to conduct annual reviews of each other's trade status, so when China joins this free-trade group, it must be granted permanent NTR (PNTR) by the United States (unless the U.S. wants to risk WTO sanctions). As part of its WTO entry, China in 1999 agreed to cut tariffs and restrictions on American agriculture, industrial products, banking, insurance, telecommunications, and movies, and to make other economic reforms.

This is good news, and not just because Coca-Cola executives have visions of 1 billion potential smiles. The question of how to change China is essentially the question of how to starve and make irrelevant the biggest welfare state in the world. As its ideology has collapsed into a shell of its former self, the Communist government has turned to economic growth as the way to preserve its legitimacy. But this is a gamble, as sustaining growth means allowing private initiative, establishing the rule of law, and tolerating the creation of a middle class. So, the Chinese regime is increasingly committed to the notion that it can be a little bit pregnant, that a Communist dictatorship can, more or less, depend on the workings of the free market for its support.

It's a risk. One example: As former Heritage Foundation analyst Stephen J. Yates, now in Vice President Cheney's office, has written, "State workers are forced to depend on government-subsidized benefits. Because they are not paid enough to be able to choose private alternatives, they must comply with intrusive government regulations, like family planning and controls on speech, or risk the loss of vital benefits." This means anything that creates employment opportunities outside the state sector potentially reduces this pressure point for the regime. And this has been the trajectory of development since late 1970s, when the state accounted for almost all economic output. Estimates differ on the exact figure now, but state-owned businesses are only part of the picture.

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Economic engagement with China serves to foster pockets of liberty in China, and possibly to undermine its regime at its roots.

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China, of course, shouldn't be mistaken for Hong Kong. Gauging the influence of the state on the Chinese economy is difficult because China's market is about as transparent as the Great Wall. The government tries to get its tentacles into any sizable economic enterprise, and many shrewd entrepreneurs include bureaucrats in their businesses from the start for protection. Managers of a given business may not even know who owns their firm, so shadowy is this stew of crony communism and capitalism. On top of all this confusion, the regime desperately works to keep its inefficient and failing state-run businesses afloat, with loans from state banks that act as perpetual subsidies—think of the U.S. Postal Service with "Chinese characteristics."

Economic engagement with China will tend to tip this mess in a positive direction. The WTO, for instance, will open the Chinese market to Western banks. Today Chinese banks can afford their incontinent lending practices because they have a captive savings market. Chinese workers must accept the rotten deal they get from these socialist dinosaurs. But when, say, Chase Manhattan shows up, this may no longer be the case, and Chinese banks, a linchpin of the state sector, will be subject to competitive pressures. In general, trade will create, from both foreign and Chinese businessmen, pressure to establish transparent rules for economic transactions—to create beachheads, in short, for the rule of law.

Economic liberty, the rule of law, and privately held wealth are all crucial ingredients to political liberalization. But sug-

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gesting a relationship between economic development and liberalization is often dismissed by critics as a quasi-Marxist economic determinism. Instead, it is watered-down John Locke: The connection between economic liberty and political liberty is central to the most admirable strain of Western political thought. The correlation between the two is also a fact. The neoconservative Project for the New American Century in a 1999 memo opposing MFN called the connection "an interesting theory, but just a theory." It would be more accurate to say it's an observation, based on, among other things, the recent history of Asia.

THE GROWTH EFFECT

It is Taiwan—on whose behalf critics of China trade sometimes say the mainland needs to be isolated—that is the prime exhibit for the political benefits of economic growth. As Taiwan became steadily more economically advanced and integrated into the world economy over the last thirty years, it also progressed from a one-party system to the constitutional democracy of today. South Korea followed roughly the same path. As the Hoover Institution's Henry S. Rowen has noted, countries tend to tip into democracies when their per capita annual GDP reaches $5,000 to $7,000. "Spain, Portugal, Chile, and Argentina, in addition to Taiwan and South Korea," Rowen writes, "all made the transition to democracy while they were in this income range."

If current trends hold, China will reach this level of wealth in fifteen to twenty years. This doesn't mean that China will join the WTO, then immediately break out the Magna Carta. The regime will bully, cheat, kill, and maim, in an effort to resist political liberalization every step of the way. (Its model may be Singapore, a rich one-party state—although one, it's worth noting, that allows considerable personal and economic liberty.) Indeed, as economic growth increases the possibility of personal freedom, it will also create more occasions for repression in China. Trade will not directly change the regime, but instead the society around it, thus creating the conditions for liberalization over the long haul.

Critics of China trade don't have the patience to wait for this long-term loosening and instead want the gratification of *doing something*, of isolating China, now. In a sense, the post–World War II period has already been a test of these two rival approaches. As Owen Harries has written in *The National Interest*, "For more than two decades—from 1949 to the early 1970s—the United States tried containing and, within its means, isolating China. That period was one of the most disastrous not only in Chinese history but in all of human history: a ruthless tyranny prevailed, millions of Chinese were killed by the regime or died because of its insane policies, obscurantism ruled, the economy was reduced to a shambles. Internationally, China actively supported subversion and insurrection throughout its region, fought a war against India, and even tried its hand at intervention in Africa."

But China's progress from a regime of mass murder thirty years ago to one of nasty repression barely registers for the more vehement critics of NTR. Indeed, the same way that it is perpetually Selma for Jesse Jackson, it is always Munich for some neoconservatives. Is the question whether to confront in Kosovo an ineffectual Balkan dictator who has already lost two or three wars? Munich! Whether to establish permanent trade relations with China? Munich, again! This is more a verbal tic than an argument. China is not the Soviet Union, let alone Nazi Germany. China doesn't have an alternative ideology with global appeal. It isn't fighting the United States on every possible front worldwide, and couldn't do so even if it wanted to. It is essentially a Third World country, with a per capita income that badly trails Taiwan's.

Of course, China's trade with the world will change this, and provide the regime more funds for the purchase of new weapons systems. What critics of China trade fail to acknowledge is that it is not in the power of the United States to stop this long-term trend. The American export market is extremely important, but China—like 19th-century America—is benefiting from a burgeoning domestic market as well. America can't wave a wand and stop Chinese growth in its tracks. China is going to join the WTO no matter what. And Europe, Japan, and other Asian countries wouldn't go along with an American effort to cut off trade with China. For instance, roughly 40,000 Taiwanese companies have $40 billion invested in China. What critics of China trade are proposing is, essentially, that America become more Taiwanese than Taiwan.

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Trade will not directly change the regime, but instead the society around it, thus creating the conditions for liberalization.

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Even if it were in Washington's power to block all trade with China, it wouldn't be wise policy. The Americas offer two—imperfect of course—case studies in the effects of trade policy. Tiny Cuba, just 90 miles away, has been isolated by the United States for four decades, but Castro remains stubbornly in place. Meanwhile, Mexico has advanced toward a full-blown liberal democracy, with an assist from the liberalizing effects of NAFTA. If economic sanctions were effective, Iraq, North Korea, Vietnam, and Burma, among others, would be teeming pluralistic societies by now. It's not true that sanctions never work—South Africa is arguably a case where they did—but economic growth and liberalization have a much better record of prompting political reform.

LEVERAGE AND ITS LIMITS

During the debate last year over granting PNTR to China, trade critics complained that the United States would lose the "leverage" it gained from the annual review under the old MFN process. It is true that every year around the time of the MFN vote, China would release dissidents from prison, in a clumsy and obvious PR gesture. But this didn't represent any serious loosening of the regime's grip. And this American "leverage" was dependent on trading with China in the first place—otherwise, there would be nothing to threaten to cut off. In any case, the U.S. should realize the limits of its ability to fine-tune internal Chinese politics as if it were adjusting the

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FM dial. Cutting off normal trade relations with China won't cause the regime to sink to its knees, while trade and economic growth will help create the conditions for liberalization in China, though not guarantee it.

Trade critics like to pretend otherwise. Take a *Weekly Standard* editorial by William Kristol and Robert Kagan at the time of the PNTR vote last year, with an epitaph quoting (of course) Winston Churchill warning against appeasement. "In the coming weeks and months" after the vote, they warned, more members of the Falun Gong and Tibetan Buddhists would be arrested: "Let those who voted for permanent trade status for China explain then what a boon it was for Chinese freedom." But no one is suggesting that free trade with China will cause freedom to blossom in the next "weeks and months." Nor should trade with China make advocates of PNTR responsible for every act of cruelty on the mainland.

Limiting U.S. trade with China would ultimately—since there is little hope that other nations would go along, let alone that it would sink the regime—be about expressing U.S. frustration and outrage with China. This moral disapproval has its place, but shouldn't come at the cost of a policy that is marginally increasing freedom in China. The U.S. should maintain a drumbeat of criticism of China's repressive practices, and should send its sternest message through a tough-minded security policy in the region. Trade critics worry that American corporations doing business in China will lobby for a softer line on the dictatorship. This is a real worry, but is nothing that can't be overcome by determined advocacy. The same Congress that is supposedly wholly owned by corporate interests when it comes to China voted 341–70 last year to pass the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act that tilted U.S. policy toward the tiny democracy.

A policy of trading with China may not be emotionally satisfying, as it requires waiting for an arrogant and nasty dictatorship to be entangled in, and perhaps brought down by, its own economic ambitions. But—and this may be the highest recommendation for any policy—it is better than the alternative. "To get rich is glorious," Deng Xiaoping famously said. His dictatorial successors may—eventually—discover that it's not quite as glorious as he thought. **NR**

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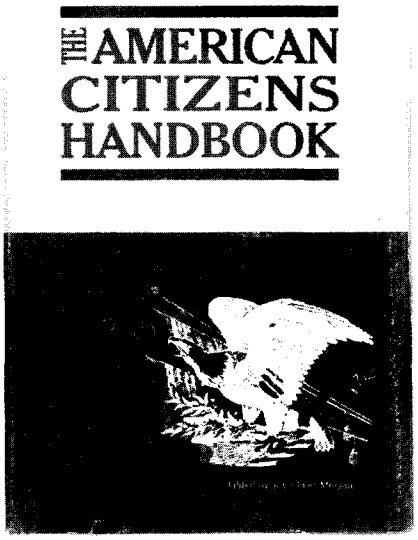
Hand It to Them

Rediscovering American Scripture

JAY NORDLINGER

LOOKING idly at my bookcase the other day, I fixed on a volume I had never noticed before: *The American Citizens Handbook*. It had come to me, I realized, from an old friend who was moving and unloading some books. It had sat on my shelf, ignored, for years. As I fingered this book, it seemed a relic from a distant, and glowing, past. What's more, it was the product of—could this be true?—the National Education Association. Coming to know this book made me practically weep for a liberalism that has been lost, and an Americanism, too.

I did some poking around, and soon learned that I was not the first "conservative" (as descendants of Jefferson are now forced to call themselves) to take an interest in the *Handbook*. Michael Farris, the home-schooling leader in Virginia, discovered it in the mid 1980s. Then the education secretary, William Bennett, used it in a speech. He challenged the NEA to reissue the book, or, if it would not, to permit others to do so. The association responded flummoxed and embarrassed. One spokesman explained, "The world has changed a lot" (ah, and so has the NEA). Another sniffed, "We've got lots of other books if [Bennett] wants to pay for them."



A blast from the past

Some years later, Lamar Alexander, running for president, mentioned the *Handbook* as a "virtual user's guide to America." Mike Farris tells me that he once met the man hired by the NEA to destroy the final 10,000 copies of the book. Had he been asked to burn them? asked Farris. That would be too good to be true—and it was. The man had buried them.

The NEA should hardly be embarrassed by this volume; it may be the highest service it has ever performed. The book first appeared in 1941, to coincide with National Citizenship Day (September 17). It went through six editions, of which I have the last, published in 1968.

The book was the project of Joy Elmer Morgan, a Nebraska-born educator and writer who lived from 1889 to 1974. For several decades, he was editor of the NEA's *Journal*. (I should affirm here that Joy Elmer Morgan was, indeed, a man. When I was quite young, I knew an old man named Shirley, who one day confided to me, "Everything was fine in my life till that damn Shirley Temple came along.") Morgan's name is seldom mentioned today, although he is reviled in certain right-wing publications as a proponent of world government and all-around threat. If Morgan could stand as the "Left," however, conservatives would dance in the streets.

The *Handbook* is a great treasury. It was originally intended to prepare young citizens for their responsibilities as voters, and as adults generally. It is a compilation of just about everything that is significant and outstanding about the United States. The work is serious, earnest, heartfelt. It is, as the NEA noted in the 1968 edition, both "inspirational and informative." It is, of course, patriotic, but in the most thoughtful way. There is nothing blinkered or rah-rah about it. The book might appear to the contemporary reader quaint—something on the order of a girl's memory album, circa 1909—but, as I absorbed its pages, I was startled by the power it carried. It puts forth an American creed, although this creed is a big and generous one, waiting to be embraced by anyone, or rejected by anyone—including the NEA.

At the end of his introduction, Morgan exhorts: "Read this book carefully; study the documents on which your rights as a citizen are based; memorize its songs and poetry." A body could do worse.

The opening essay, as well, belongs to Morgan: "Your Citizenship in the Making." Its most striking quality, along with wisdom, is gratitude: "It is a high privilege to be a citizen of the United States. There are those in less fortunate circumstances who would gladly give all they possess for the mere chance to come here to live." That is a bracing statement, and an obviously true one. Try out a couple more of Morgan's bracing, obviously true statements:

> Democracy can find its fullest expression in the roots of religion, which has ever emphasized the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. For democracy to reach its highest fruition, our society must include that larger liberty and justice preached so eloquently by the Hebrew Prophets and by Jesus.

> No one would contend that the Constitution is a perfect document. The very men who framed it were conscious of its shortcomings. . . . We have our difficulties agreeing among ourselves as to what we want the Constitution to be and how we want it to be interpreted or administered. But these are small matters as compared with the great fact of the Constitution itself, standing between us and chaos, between us and a return to the brutalities and confusion of earlier centuries.

Talk like that can, today, get you laughed out of school—quite literally.

The next section of the *Handbook* lays out the "Characteristics of the Good Democratic Citizen." (A lot of these titles cannot help provoking present-day giggles, which is part of our problem.) In 1949, a branch of the Defense Department asked a branch of the NEA to come up with a

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description of the "good democratic citizen." A committee was duly formed, and a document resulted, listing 24 characteristics, with subsets for each. What is most remarkable about them is the balance they achieve. They are a beautiful melding of the "liberal" and the "conservative." For example, under "Respects and upholds the law and its agencies," we have, "[The good democratic citizen] respects and supports officers who enforce the law, but does not permit his zeal for law enforcement to encourage officials to infringe upon guaranteed civil rights." (We also read, "understands what perjury means and testifies honestly"—ahem.) On the international front, we have, "Knows about, critically evaluates, and supports promising efforts to prevent war, but stands ready to defend his country against tyranny and aggression."

Several of these characteristics, the NEA would choke to enunciate today. "Since the people are intelligent enough to govern themselves, they do not need protection by censorship"—this would appear to preclude campus speech codes. Furthermore, that good democratic citizen "rejects all group claims to special privilege"—bad news for affirmative action. And get a load of this one: Under "Puts the general welfare above his own whenever a choice between them is necessary," we read, "avoids the abuse of public benefits (e.g., the misuse of unemployment compensation by a process of malingering)." This is truly a foreign language.

This section, like the *Handbook* itself, is hardly naïve or unrealistic. The effect of the whole is not at all treacly or goody-goody. Yet it is a strong antidote to cynicism and the suffocating cloak of irony: Our good democratic citizen "is critically aware of differences between democratic ideals and accomplishments, but works to improve accomplishments and refuses to become cynical about the differences."

An essay by Henry Steele Commager comes as a hell of a jolt. If anyone represents the old liberalism—the liberalism of this volume—it is Commager. The gulf between him and, say, Eric Foner today is enormous. Of course, Professor Foner is no liberal; we simply have to call him that, in accordance with a foolish and misleading political taxonomy. (Angela Davis, the Communist Party official, is often described in the press as a liberal, as we Right-types have long liked to note.) In "Our Schools Have Kept Us Free" (another of those titles), Commager makes a stirring case for common education, and in particular for its assimilative power. "How, after all, [are] millions of newcomers to become 'Americans'—in language, in ways of life and thought, in citizenship?" The common school, he writes, has served "the cause of American democracy." The truth is,

> this most heterogeneous of modern societies—profoundly varied in racial background, religious faith, social and economic interest—has ever seemed the most easy prey to forces of riotous privilege and ruinous division. These forces have not prevailed; they have been routed, above all, in the schoolrooms and on the playgrounds of America.

Commager wrote these words in 1950. And how are the "forces of riotous privilege and ruinous division" faring now? Pretty well, huh? This is what compels us "conservatives" to retreat to school choice and let-a-thousand-flowers-bloom, the common school, which bound the country together, having crumbled, not least because of the *illiberal* urgings and practices of the NEA.

The *Handbook* is stocked with key documents (the Magna Carta, the Gettyburg Address), portraits, mini-bios, aphorisms, telling facts, assorted tidbits. Its second half is dominated by the "Golden Treasury" (sigh, snort), which is an anthology of literary and other items with which civilized people should be acquainted. It begins with the Bible, moves on to Buddha, Confucius, Mohammed, et al., and continues in a glorious potpourri, a storehouse of pluralism and diversity (a good word stolen and perverted by a race-obsessed New Left). We have in this book the evidence of a nation, and a civilization. Here, the bond holds firm; the salt retains its savour.

■

We have in this book the evidence of a nation, and a civilization. Here, the bond holds firm; the salt retains its savour. But who will taste?

■

But who will taste? America is a young country, as everyone says, but we seem to have lost so quickly our . . . our nationhood. Our cultural and spiritual nationhood. This handbook was last published in 1968, but it might as well be an archeological find, a dusty curiosity. An NEA statement produced in the book—"Education for All American Youth"—seems almost reactionary today. Why? How did what was liberal become "conservative" (or worse) so fast? How did it happen that "liberals," in the late 1990s, rallied around—with pulsing passion—a president who had a) used a 21-year-old intern for sex, b) perjured himself in court proceedings, c) abused his office, d) tampered with witnesses, e) cheated, lied, defamed, f)—but that is another rant (though a clearly related one). The good liberal fashioners of *The American Citizens Handbook* could never have been Clintonites.

This little book—or not so little: over 600 pages—undeniably did something to me, and for me: It stirred what some guy once called "mystic chords of memory." It would do the same for others. And if that memory were totally absent, the book would install it.

I tell you, I will never give up my copy—I would fear not finding another. I would like to share it with children. While reading it, I refrained even from making notes in it, unwilling to deface it. It is sick, though—positively sick—that I should feel this way. That I should feel that I possess something rare and talismanic, something quasi-forbidden, almost underground. This stuff should be as common as water—and it was. It should be again. It *could* be again, if people wanted it, demanded it. All those volumes that lie a-molderin' in their grave: We should dig 'em up. **NR**

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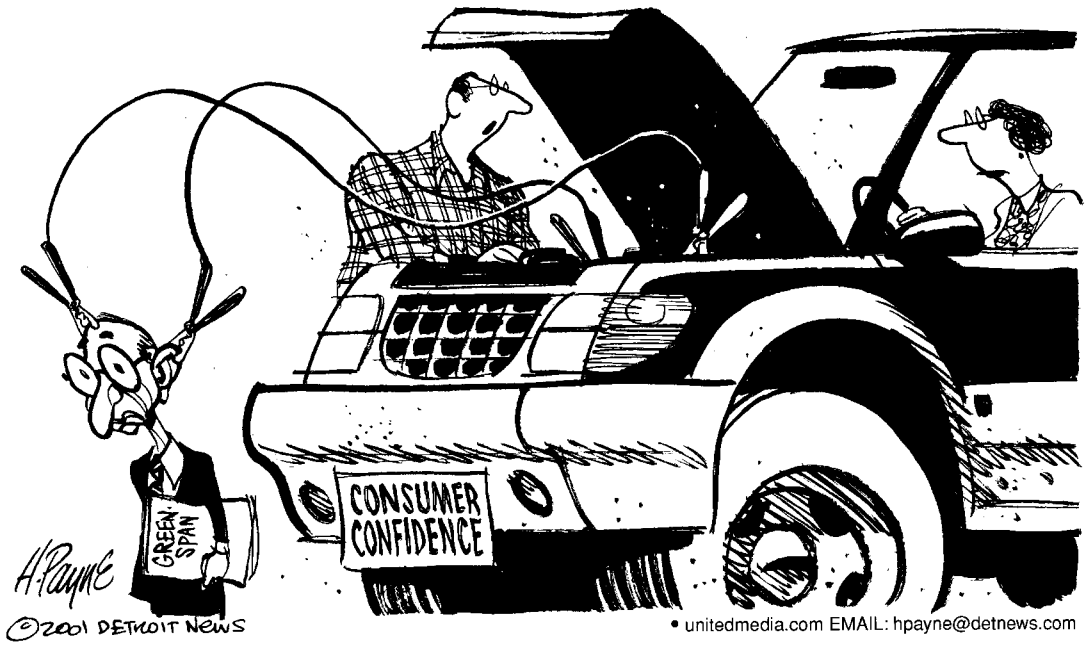
HELP!!!!



"OKAY- TRY 'ER NOW, MILDRED!"

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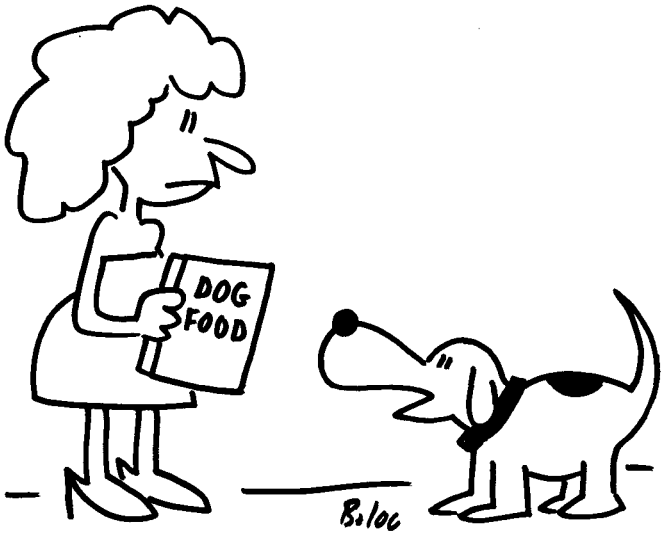
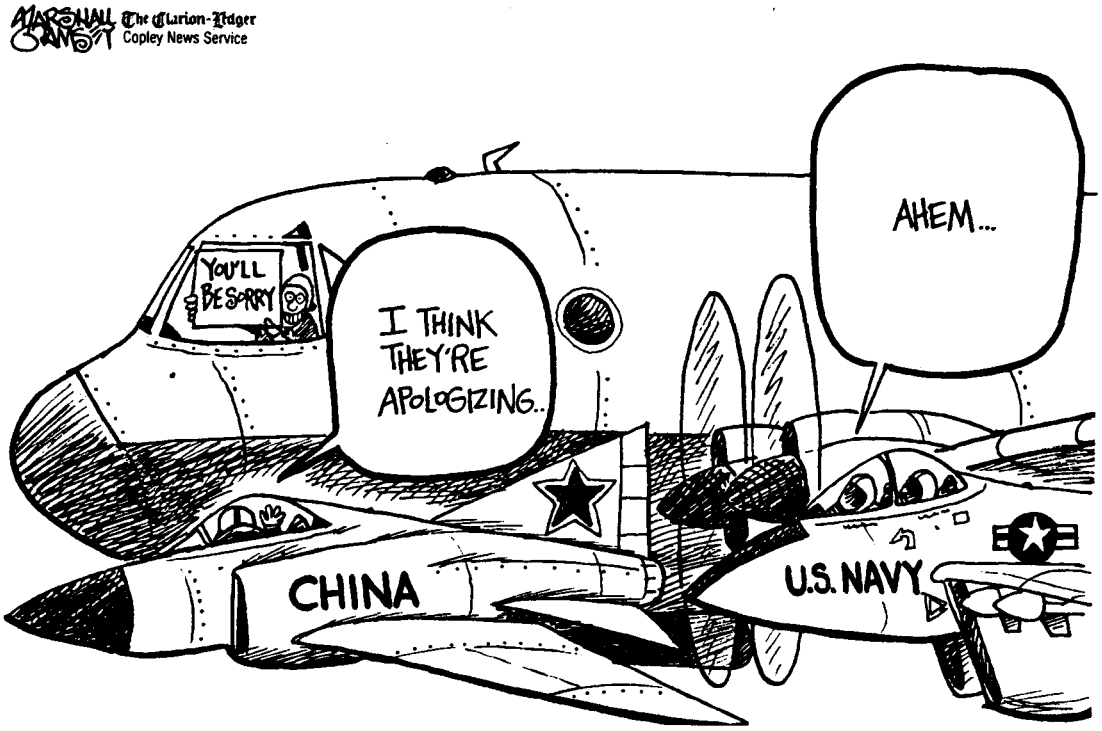


"No, thanks—I'm full of homework."

THE GERRYMANDER

North Carolina's its abode;
It slithers as it goes,
Accumulating Democrats
From head to icky toes.
By five to four the Court supports
The creature's silhouette,
But Sandra Day's long in the tooth,
And so is that quintet.

—W. H. VON DREELE



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THE LONG VIEW

By Rob Long

PALISADES MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC
Malibu, California

DOCTOR'S NOTES

PATIENT: Barbra S.
INSURANCE: SAG, AFTRA, DGA, ASCAP, WGA

6/16/00

Patient arrives, elated. Has just raised $2,300,000.00 for a political candidate—A. G. Jr.—and is "convinced" that he'll win in November. In addition, she is donating $400,000 from her personal funds. When questioned about the possibility that her father-worship issues are being transferred to yet another politician, patient becomes angry and upset, and threatens to sing the love theme from "Yentl." Patient explains that this is a crucial time in our nation's history, where the forces of evil are arrayed against the forces of good. When reminded that this was her justification for directing and starring in the ill-fated film "The Mirror Has Two Faces," patient becomes sullen.

12/21/00

After a six-month absence, patient reappears. She is dazed and sluggish. She says she cannot reconcile herself to the outcome of the presidential election. She is convinced it is a plot to somehow, some way, force her to do another concert series.

Patient is distraught that the candidate she preferred has not, in fact, been successful. Patient finds it impossible to accept that the American people chose someone she does not approve of. When reminded, gently, that America is a large country with many people and many points of view, patient responds that "I know the people. The people love me. The people did not elect this man."

When asked to name the date of the patient's most recent encounter with any person not directly in her employ, patient thinks silently for several minutes, finally naming Mr. David Geffen. When asked to name the date of the patient's most recent encounter with any person not directly in her employ whose total annual household income is below $300,000, patient thinks silently for several minutes, then shrugs.

12/22/00

Receive strange message on office voice mail from an unidentified sobbing woman. Convinced it is patient Barbra S. when, after "star 69-ing," an answering machine picks up with a recording of "The Way We Were."

Later, at dinner, receive a frantic page from patient, demanding to know how it is she can be diagnosed as "paranoid" when, in fact, the Supreme Court of the United States is "out to get me." Patient is cautioned once again against interpreting current political events in an entirely personal way. "You don't think this is personal? Doc? Hello? I'm Jewish. This is about Palm Beach. How is it not personal? Hello?"

12/27/00

Patient arrives without appointment and demands that the Palisades Mental Health Clinic, as a professional corporation, purchase a large soup tureen and sterling silver ladle in the Lenox Montclair pattern for newly elected senator Hillary Rodham Clinton. When told that we, as a general policy, do not make political contributions, patient becomes irate. "Are you seriously serious?" she asks, over and over. "What? Are you seriously seriously serious?"

3/24/01

Patient arrives with a printed document she insists be read during her session. It is a political tract of some sort, with a distinct messianic bent. Am concerned that patient is once again slipping into self-delusional state. While patient is a perfectly intelligent and talented person, her political theories seem out of touch and outmoded. Her cocoon-like existence, brought about by her great personal wealth and paranoia, is not conducive to the kind of finger-on-the-pulse, man-in-the-street grassroots connection that the therapist—admittedly, an amateur in these matters—assumes is necessary to make effective political strategy.

Patient responds to these concerns by reminding therapist of her many trips to the White House, and to the very close attention paid to her theories by its recent occupant. Therapist suggests that perhaps the attention paid to her theories by certain political figures had more to do with her generous campaign contributions than to any political savvy she may or may not possess.

Patient then accuses therapist of "Naderism" and continues to read aloud from her tract. Therapist uses this time to catch up on correspondence and update his Quicken file.

Patient insists that the way to success is to "stop being so nice." Therapist wonders (silently) when, exactly, the "being nice" strategy was supposed to have been attempted.

4/23/01

Patient arrives 20 minutes late without apology. After a short song and a quick anecdote, patient claims that this is "absolutely, totally, one-hundred-percent-sure my last session." She exits with a flourish, but is soon back to talk about her mission to "save America." Typical B.S. behavior.

Suggestion of possible switch to group therapy is met with stony silence.

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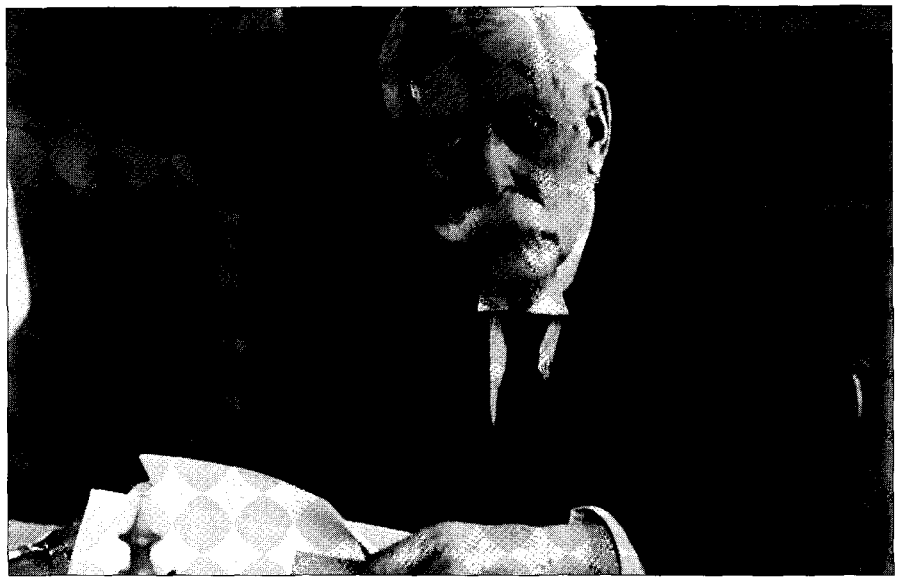
Judging Holmes

RAMESH PONNURU

Law Without Values: The Life, Work, and Legacy of Justice Holmes, by Albert W. Alschuler (Chicago, 325 pp., $30)



Bettmann/CORBIS

Justice Holmes at his desk, ca. 1920

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES JR., the author informs us at the beginning of his book, "is the only justice of the Supreme Court to have been the subject of a bestselling historical novel, a hit Broadway play, and a motion picture. A mountain in Alaska bears his name, and when letters could be mailed for 15 cents, he peered from their corners on purple postage stamps."

Holmes seems to have known everyone in the course of his 94 years. His father was a poet and founder of *The Atlantic Monthly*; Emerson, Hawthorne, and Melville were part of Holmes Sr.'s circle. The younger Holmes's claim to have shouted "Get down, you damn fool!" at Abraham Lincoln during a Civil War battle may have been false, but he was certainly on the same battlefield. He knew both Jameses, and both Roosevelts. One of his last clerks on the Court—Holmes served from 1902 to 1932—was Alger Hiss.

It is difficult to overstate Justice Holmes's place in the pantheon of American law. He is widely held to have brought American legal thought into the modern age by subjecting it to his skepticism. Left and Right unite in praising Holmes. Since the '20s, liberals have idolized him for his decisions protecting freedom of speech and permitting social-welfare legislation. Contemporary conservatives have tended to claim Holmes as an exemplar of "judicial restraint," since he was willing to uphold the constitutionality of social-welfare legislation he disliked. (He was fond of saying that "if my fellow citizens want to go to hell, I will help them. It's my job.")

Yet there has long been an undercurrent of skepticism about the grand old skeptic himself. Two authorized biographers of Holmes were unable to produce books because of the distaste they acquired for their subject. One of these, Grant Gilmore, summed up ten years of research thus in a lecture at Yale: "The real Holmes was savage, harsh, and cruel, a bitter and lifelong pessimist who saw in the course of human life nothing but a continuing struggle in which the rich and powerful impose their will on the poor and weak."

Gilmore's view is shared by Albert W. Alschuler—with the added indictment that Holmes at best looked on that struggle with detachment, and at worst rooted for the powerful. *Law Without Values* frankly aims to knock Holmes off his pedestal.

Alschuler argues, as others have, that the horrors of the Civil War killed Holmes's idealism. Holmes was an ardent abolitionist when, at age 20, he volunteered for the war. Three months after he enlisted, he almost died of a serious chest wound at Ball's Bluff. He would be shot through the neck at Antietam, and wounded again at Chancellorsville. He suffered scurvy and dysentery, saw dead men piled up six deep in trenches, learned about army mismanagement. His commitment to abolitionism flagged. Later in life, he would often express disdain for all -isms, abolitionism very much included, and the sort of passionate commitment they inspire.

Holmes's correspondence offers no shortage of examples of this disdain. About a pacifist in World War I, he wrote, "What damned fools people are who believe things. . . . All 'isms seem to me silly—but this hyperaethereal respect for human life seems perhaps the silliest of all." In another letter, he wrote, "I see no reason for attributing to a man a significance different in kind from that which belongs to a baboon or a grain of sand."

He took a similarly jaundiced view of the concepts of rights, truth, and justice. "All my life I have sneered at the natural rights of man." Rights were merely "what a given crowd will fight for." Truth was "what I can't help believing. . . . I can't help preferring port to ditch-water, but I see no ground for supposing that the cosmos shares my weakness." And *de*

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gustibus non est disputandum. "[W]hen men differ in taste as to the kind of world they want the only thing to do is go to work killing."

Yet Holmes eventually came to appreciate aspects of the wartime experience that had snuffed out his ideals. The highest expression of that appreciation came in "The Soldier's Faith," an address Holmes gave at Harvard on Memorial Day in 1895: "I do not know what is true. I do not know the meaning of the universe. But in the midst of doubt, in the collapse of creeds, there is one thing I do not doubt, that no man who lives in the same world with most of us can doubt, and that is that the faith is true and adorable which leads a soldier to throw away his life in obedience to a blindly accepted duty, in a cause which he little understands, in a plan of campaign of which he has no notion, under tactics of which he does not see the use." Teddy Roosevelt, of course, loved the speech.

Alschuler gives various labels to the philosophy with which Holmes emerged from the war: "existentialism," "noble nihilism," "Darwinism." It is a philosophy that venerates power, struggle, and assertions of will. Holmes has sometimes been described as a "utilitarian," but this is incorrect. He believed that different people inevitably had clashing interests and tastes, and that these differences could not be argued out or aggregated into some common good. The only thing to do is to go to work killing.

It will not do to dismiss Holmes's more troubling remarks, as some of his admirers do, as attempts to shock his correspondents. When a man makes so many such remarks over a period of decades, and when (as we will see) these remarks are consistent with his life's work, it is reasonable to assume he means what he says. Admirers can, it is true, point to other Holmes remarks that suggest that he retained a romantic streak. But on examination, what he is romanticizing usually turns out to be war, will, and death.

To see how Holmes's dark vision affected his legal thought, one need look no further than his seminal article, "The Path of the Law," published in the *Harvard Law Review* in 1897. In this article he laid out his definition of the law, his "prediction theory": "The prophecies of what the courts will do in fact, and nothing more pretentious, are what I mean by the law." He also wrote, "If you want to know the law and nothing else, you must look at it as a bad man, who cares only for the material consequences which such knowledge enables him to predict." The use in law of moral terminology—words such as "duty" and "right"—was an obstacle to "the clearness of our thought." Holmes applied these points to the law of contracts: "The duty to keep a contract at common law means a prediction that you must pay damages if you do not keep it,—and nothing else."

■

Holmes would not 'impose his morality' from the bench, because he did not have much to impose.

■

Holmes conceded that the law reflects the prevalent moral sentiments of the time it was made, but wanted to evacuate any moral content from the analysis of law. This view might be criticized for its amorality, and Alschuler does so. But he also argues that it fails as a matter of description. A prediction theory of the law makes unintelligible the notion that a court can get the law wrong. How, for example, can one use that theory to make sense of the dissents Holmes wrote on the Supreme Court? Indeed, the theory offers almost no guidance to any judge. You can't decide a case by predicting how you will decide it. A theory of the law that cannot see the law from a judge's point of view cannot truly describe the law.

Some of Holmes's letters suggest that he also believed that the test of a good law was that it reflected "the dominant force" or "equilibrium of power" in a community. They suggest, as well, that this view was the foundation of Holmes's judicial restraint. In 1914, he wrote to Felix Frankfurter: "I quite agree that a law should be called good if it reflects the will of the dominant forces of the community even if it will take us to hell."

This view is vulnerable to some of the same objections as the prediction theory of the law. What, to begin with, is the dominant power in a community? Most social Darwinists at the time tended to regard the "robber barons" as dominant and to oppose legislation that would weaken them. Holmes appears to have shared this view, but also to have believed that when "the crowd" (as he styled it) manages to enact egalitarian legislation it has shown that it is in fact the dominant power. But this is no solution at all. As Alschuler points out, a judge who strikes down that legislation changes the "equilibrium of power." Like Holmes's prediction theory, the judicial Darwinism he hinted at tended to collapse into the tautology that winners win—which does not do much to guide judges.

While Alschuler denies any intention to question Holmes's greatness, he certainly seems to cut down his every claim to it. Liberals consider Holmes a hero of free speech because he devised the "clear and present danger" test, under which speech can be restricted only if it presents such a danger. Alschuler points out that Holmes did not mean the test to be as protective of speech as the liberals do, and in fact invented it in the course of opinions allowing the jailing of pacifist agitators during World War I.

Alschuler also demolishes the claim that Holmes freed American legal thought from the myth that common law was a logical system that judges needed to deduce. "The life of the law has not been logic: It has been experience," Holmes wrote in *The Common Law* (1881). Alschuler argues that this deductivism was long dead by the time Holmes wrote, if indeed it ever lived. None of those who reviewed Holmes's book objected to his empiricism. Holmes probably himself acquired it from other writers, whom he did not cite.

So does Alschuler succeed in taking Holmes down? No. Partly this is because his book is so weird. I will confine myself to one example. In a footnote, Alschuler writes—the ellipses are his—"As Brian Simpson has remarked poetically, '[T]he name "formalism" . . . seems to me . . . in general use, to be little more than a . . . term of abuse.' . . . The rhyme is admittedly the product of my ellipses; Simpson and I should be listed as co-poets." Like I said, weird.

Alschuler is also too quick to pounce on Holmes. His treatment of *Buck v. Bell* (1927), one of Holmes's most notorious decisions on the Supreme Court, is a case

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in point. The Court upheld an involuntary-sterilization law, with Holmes—a eugenicist—writing, "Three generations of imbeciles are enough." In a subsequent letter he wrote that "establishing the constitutionality of a law permitting the sterilization of imbeciles . . . gave me pleasure." Let's stipulate that the laws in question were wicked, and that Holmes should not have endorsed them in his decision. Still, are we sure that Holmes's decision was wrong? It's not obvious that legislators lack the constitutional authority to enact such laws, however misguided they may be.

Alschuler's conclusion, however, is surely wrong. He writes, "Support for forced sterilization marked the outer limits of the eugenics movement in America—apart, that is, from the remarks of Justice Holmes and a very few others." This in a paragraph noting that thirty states had approved such legislation.

In the last chapter of *Law Without Values*, Alschuler blames the spread of Holmesian skepticism about morals for everything from "selfish consumerism" to "child abuse." At one point, he writes, "One cannot blame teen pregnancies on Oliver Wendell Holmes." When an author finds himself having to write such a sentence, it is probably a good idea for him to back up. Even readers who are generally sympathetic to Alschuler's basic idea will find his elaboration of it too scattershot and tossed-off to be persuasive. As they will find this digressive, impish, interesting book. Alschuler mentions Emerson's review of one of Holmes's undergraduate essays: "When you strike at a king, you must *kill* him." Alschuler does not kill the king.

Which is not to say that the king is not worth going after. Holmes's moral skepticism may not have caused our teen-pregnancy rates, but it did begin the process of detaching the argument for judicial restraint from objective morality. Holmes believed in judicial restraint and in moral skepticism, and he often suggested a connection between the two. He would not "impose his morality" from the bench, to use today's formulation, because he did not have much to impose.

It is a style of argument that latter-day advocates of judicial restraint have unfortunately kept alive. Robert Bork, William Rehnquist, and Antonin Scalia have all from time to time argued (or been taken to argue) that judges should not let their moral views about a law affect their decisions about it, because who's to say if their moral views are right? Judges should practice restraint in order to avoid comprehensive theories of justice. This sort of rhetoric has, in turn, inspired a series of fusillades against them by the great conservative scholar Harry Jaffa, who accuses them of moral relativism.

Yet the argument for judicial restraint does not have to be grounded in cognitive humility about morals. Indeed, it cannot be so grounded. Bork, Rehnquist, and Scalia are not skeptics. They believe that it is objectively wrong for a judge to assume powers not granted him by the Constitution. If, on the other hand, there are no moral limits that have objective validity—and if, as Holmes argued, law is just whatever judges do—then why shouldn't judges do whatever they wish and can? From the 1930s on, liberal "judicial realists" took Holmes's premises to essentially this conclusion.

To escape this trap, conservative jurists would have to recover a mature understanding of natural law. Their fear is that a judge guided by natural law would try to force the laws to reflect moral truth—striking down laws that violate their understanding of natural law. But this is much too crude.

A natural-law judge should reason along the following lines: All of us have valid moral obligations. Among these is the obligation, almost all the time, to follow the positive law, that is, the law enacted by legitimate lawmaking authorities. Judges have this obligation as well. The extent to which judges can look beyond the positive law to address questions of substantive justice is itself a matter of positive law. If the positive law divides institutional authority in a way that imposes constraints on a judge's power to do that, he has to respect those constraints. A natural-law judge in such a system—in our system, for example—has to practice restraint. In so doing, he serves an objective moral good, the rule of law.

We do not reason along these lines because natural law never recovered from the withering scorn ceaselessly directed at it by skeptics such as Holmes. Even if we squabble along the way, we are all on Holmes's path. And that path leads nowhere. **NR**

Servants of Power

ARAM BAKSHIAN JR.

Napoleon and His Collaborators: The Making of a Dictatorship, by Isser Woloch (Norton, 281 pp., $29.95)

CORSICA, that fractious little island annexed by France in 1768, has traditionally supplied its unloved stepmother with two sorts of citizens: gangsters and gendarmes. Opinion remains divided over whether her most famous son, born one year after France took over, was more cop or robber. As master of the largest, most acquisitive police state of early modern times, perhaps Napoleon Bonaparte combined both functions.

■

Napoleon was not so much Europe's last Caesar as its Founding Fascist.

■

Most biographers have portrayed Napoleon as coming to power by his own unaided merit and daring. But every modern dictator has been aided by a cadre of bureaucratic opportunists who put his orders into practice. In *Napoleon and His Collaborators*, Columbia professor Isser Woloch depicts some of the key functionaries who helped bring Napoleon to power and administered his authoritarian empire.

Although as a self-proclaimed Marxist Woloch eschews the "great man" approach to history, he does recognize Napoleon as a "remarkable individual." His major emphasis, however, is on the interaction between Napoleon and his "collaborators." The use of this loaded

Mr. Bakshian, a former council member of the National Endowment for the Humanities, is editor-in-chief of *American Speaker*.

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term suggests that Woloch will pass some kind of moral judgment on these bureaucratic henchmen, similar to that rendered by history on the Nazi collaborators of Vichy France. But like so many historians with a leftward bias, Woloch seems to have trouble differentiating between good and evil on an individual human basis, or even caring much about it.

Who were these "collaborators"? They ran the gamut from ex-Jacobins to ex-royalists, making up an interesting gallery of characters. Jean-Jacques-Régis Cambacérès was an effete gourmand of porcine dimensions, with a brilliant legal mind, an inexhaustible appetite for perks, and few, if any, serious convictions. Cambacérès was the second-highest-ranking official in the Empire, and Woloch performs a useful service by introducing this important but neglected figure to a wider audience. The same applies to Boulay de la Muerthe, Théophile Berlier, Antoine Thibaudeau, Etienne-Denis Pasquier, and the rest.

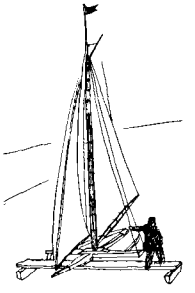
The convergence of their careers with Napoleon's began not as a meeting of the minds, but as the result of a brazen act of force. Woloch coyly terms the military coup that brought Napoleon to power on November 9, 1799, "The Joint Venture of Brumaire," characterizing the participants as "a group of insecure republican politicians who had lost their faith in their own . . . regime." True as far as it goes, this misses the main point. Yes, Napoleon signed on some civilian politicians before launching his coup; but the coup itself was not so much a collective venture as one more case of a ruthless strongman's using whatever human material was at hand to grab for power. Ultimately, it was the bayonets of Napoleon's grenadiers—not the speeches of his political supporters—that installed the dictatorship.

■

Acquiescence is usually the rule, and principled opposition the exception, for most people most of the time.

■

Napoleon presented himself not as Cincinnatus—a citizen soldier defending the fatherland and its republican virtues—but as Caesar. The Brumaire coup was his Rubicon; hence the rapid forced march from coup to Consulate to Empire. But if Napoleon delighted in comparing himself to Caesar and Charlemagne, in reality he was not so much Europe's last Caesar as its Founding Fascist. The egomaniacal swagger; the overdone uniforms; the vulgar excess in all things related to taste, rhetoric, and manners; the lip service to progress and populism screening police-state thuggery; the merciless plundering of neighbor states: What did all these characteristics of Napoleonic France define if not the first fascist regime?



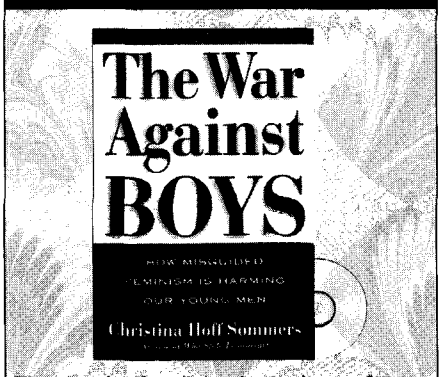
Unfortunately, Woloch doesn't get this. To him, France under Napoleon "was far from resembling an unabashed dictatorship in the style of a *caudillo* in the nineteenth century or a junta of colonels in the twentieth." Really? Once he attained power, Napoleon's political foes, like those in any banana republic, became remarkably accident-prone. General Pichegru, an early revolutionary hero who later flirted with the royalists, was found strangled in his cell. The young, totally innocent Duc d'Enghien was kidnapped from foreign soil and judicially murdered on Napoleon's personal authority in order to intimidate the opposition. And, as part of a punitive expedition against Haiti, Napoleon's brother-in-law, General Leclerc, entrapped and abducted Toussaint L'Ouverture, the former slave and freedom fighter, and perhaps the first and last decent leader in that island's blighted history. Towering over all these individual crimes is the tremendous butcherer's bill for ever bigger, more delusional military adventures, culminating in Napoleon's catastrophic 1812 invasion of Russia.

Through it all, Prof. Woloch follows the paper trail of his talented cast of civil *fonctionnaires*, watching them grow rich and collect medals and improvised titles in return for their usually unquestioning obedience.

Were revolutionary carnage and Napoleonic gore worth suffering for the administrative, social, and legal reforms fostered by Woloch's collaborators? Conventional wisdom has it that the two great achievements of the period were the modernization of France's military and civil establishments and the introduction of a merit-based career system, summed up by the old saw that every soldier of Napoleon "carried a marshal's baton in his knapsack." But many of the reforms that came to fruition under the Consulate and the Empire had begun under the old regime—and were as likely delayed as accelerated by the revolutionary chaos that followed.

The Napoleonic Code, considered by many the leader's greatest accomplishment, did indeed standardize and codify laws that had differed from province to province under the old regime and were further muddled by erratic bursts of revolutionary legislation. But the work on legal reform had begun before Napoleon came to power, and remained primarily in the hands of civilian savants and lawyers. By contrast,

LISTEN TO WHAT YOU'VE BEEN MISSING



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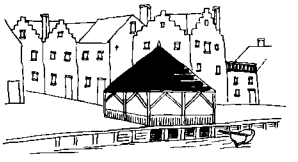
as one of Napoleon's better biographers, J. Christopher Herold, pointed out, some of the code's most negative features—restricting rights of inheritance, diminishing the legal standing of women, and other "illiberal, not to say reactionary" clauses—can be directly traced to his personal influence. Even the Gribeauval artillery system Napoleon used to such advantage had been developed in the 1760s, long before he set foot in the royal military school at Brienne.



Similarly, the roots of the new meritocracy preceded both Napoleon and the revolution. Of the 26 marshals he created, only five could really pass as "men of the people." Half of them had, like Napoleon himself, already earned officer's commissions in the pre-revolutionary Royal Army. As to class origins, 21 were drawn from either the aristocracy or the large bourgeois class of lawyers, doctors, civil servants, merchants, financiers, and well-to-do tradesmen and artisans that was already bloodlessly expanding its power *before* the revolution. Much the same was true of the civilian officials on whom Woloch concentrates.

Most of the latter, after trimming their sails to accommodate the Terror, the Directory, the Consulate, and the Empire, quickly came to terms with the Bourbon Restoration after Napoleon's abdication in 1814. But many of them, having sworn allegiance to the Bourbons, flocked back to Napoleon during his doomed return from Elba in 1815. This final flip-flop of the *fonctionnaires*—to an outlawed usurper, in violation of oath—makes the Vicar of Bray look like a pillar of integrity.

Such ethical elasticity doesn't seem to bother Woloch. If not exactly justifying it, he tries to explain it away on idealistic grounds. Far from being cynical, Napoleon's collaborators were attracted by the "evanescent prospect of a liberal empire [that] was their vision, not Napoleon's, vindicating, it might well have seemed, fourteen years of collaboration." "Evanescent" is just the right word. As with so many intellectuals offered trinkets, titles, and tenure in return for service to dubious regimes or institutions, their justification was vaporous from the start.

Etienne-Denis Pasquier was worthier than most, and having been born in the reign of Louis XV in 1767, lived to see a burlesque revival of the Napoleonic legend under Napoleon III. There is a whimsical passage in his *Memoirs* that, while its author can scarcely have meant to apply it to himself, may tell us more about the mindset of Pasquier and his fellow "collaborators" than anything in Woloch's interesting but not particularly insightful book.

In the heyday of the First Empire, Pasquier found himself inspecting a prison that boasted a model work program. Finishing his tour, he was approached by a little clerk who had been tagging after him. "Your honor does not recognize me," the little man said. "Yet it was I who had the honor of signing you in here in 1794." Pasquier had indeed been imprisoned there during the Terror, narrowly escaping execution. Now he was confronted by his ex-jailer, who had also survived and thrived during so many different regimes and seemed "almost proud of having done so." Far from taking offense, Pasquier offers this near-Wolochian rationale for his little jailer.

> Fundamentally, what was he but what we usually regard as a good employee, a man who never looked beyond what he considered to be his duty, and who had been solely engaged in carrying out honestly the job that provided him with a living? Are we not making a mistake, if we presume to demand of the general run of mankind that they should do anything more than this?

Of both honest jailers and pampered senior collaborators it may be unrealistic to expect much more. Acquiescence is usually the rule, and principled opposition (or even non-participation) the exception, for most people most of the time. But as Napoleon's 20th-century imitators—from Hitler and Stalin to Ceausescu and the "Emperor" Bokassa—proved all too often, the price humanity pays for the loss of its moral compass is oppression, darkness, and death. **NR**

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- analyzing the obstacles, within the culture or the church, that impede a more robust Catholic presence in the public square.

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Keeper of the Flame

SCOTT MORRIS

Allen Tate: Orphan of the South, by Thomas A. Underwood (Princeton, 429 pp., $35)

"I DOUBT," the novelist Malcolm Cowley once stated, "that any other poet in this country is a better judge of his contemporaries than Allen Tate." Literary critic R. P. Blackmur ranked Tate as an artist above Hemingway. T. S. Eliot considered him the best poet writing in America. More recently, George Core, editor of *The Sewanee Review*, argued that Tate "may well be the best American critic of our century."

The quantity, quality, and diversity of the work Tate left behind is, indeed, remarkable. He was the author of two biographies, a memoir, eight collections each of poetry and essays, a novel, and over a hundred articles. He was an editor of and contributor to both *The Fugitive* and the Agrarian manifesto *I'll Take My Stand*, which remains an important work of political and cultural philosophy. As for awards and honors, Tate occupied the chair of poetry at the Library of Congress, served as president of the National Institute of Arts and Letters, was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and won prizes from the Academy of American Poets and other arbiters of artistic greatness. Three years before his death in 1979, Tate was given the National Medal for Literature.

Yet for all of his achievements, Tate has suffered curious neglect. The reasons will be discussed below, but for now the good news is that there are signs his reputation is being restored. In 1999, ISI Books published his *Essays of Four Decades*, making Tate's critical work available again. And we now have the first installment of a two-volume biography, which covers Tate's life from his birth in 1899 in Winchester, Kentucky, to the publication of his acclaimed novel *The Fathers* in 1938.

Precocious and with a cranium large enough to titillate a phrenologist, Tate was awkward and aloof as a child. But by the time he enrolled at Tennessee's Vanderbilt University, Tate had learned to play the *enfant terrible*. "If Jesus Christ should come upon earth and present me a poem I sincerely thought inferior, I would tell him *just that* to his teeth," the undergraduate once tenderly remarked. Though this comment betrays Tate's youthful hubris, it also speaks to his fearless commitment to art. Years later his dedication led Hemingway to conclude, "What it came down to was guts. And moral guts Allen had."

■

'What it came down to was guts,' said Hemingway. 'And moral guts Allen had.'

■

Even courage and genius need pruning, however, and happily for Tate he arrived at Vanderbilt just as the group of young thinkers who came to call themselves the Fugitives was beginning to coalesce. From this nascent movement would come the Agrarians and the New Critics. Donald Davidson, Robert Penn Warren, and John Crowe Ransom are only three of the great writers nurtured by these remarkable gatherings.

A hotheaded advocate of modernism, Tate was publishing poetry in national magazines even as an undergraduate. Looking back on this period, he described himself as "a prig as disagreeable as you could possibly conjure up." But with the assistance of Davidson, Ransom, and the others, Tate matured and acquired intellectual discipline. When he moved to New York in the 1920s and met the poets and critics he had admired from afar—Hart Crane, e. e. cummings, and Malcolm Cowley—he was at last able to take the full measure of his Fugitive years. Though the young writers he met up north were great talents, they had little interest in the philosophical and aesthetic ideas that had captivated him and his fellow Fugitives. Having initially bridled at his mentors' old-fashioned rigor, he now saw that he had been given a valuable inheritance, one that served him particularly well as a participant in (as well as a critic of) modernism.

Tate's postgraduate years were marked by growing fame, relentless poverty, and great eccentricity. Underwood's biography abounds with lively anecdotes, providing a vivid primer on the American literary scene of the last century. We are informed, for example, that Tate and his future wife, the novelist Caroline Gordon, first made love in a Kentucky graveyard during a visit to Robert Penn Warren after Warren had tried to kill himself. (Gordon herself claimed that she had tried to commit suicide at the age of four.) We are also told of Tate's run-ins with various Left Bank expatriates, including Hemingway and Fitzgerald. Underwood offers a priceless encounter between Tate and Gertrude Stein, who one day remarked that no southerner could afford to know any history. Tate, who was then in the middle of researching a biography, shook his head and replied: "You ignorant old bi**h!" Thereby confirming once and for all his impeccable literary judgment.

Underwood also details the summer Robert Lowell came to live with Tate, "inaugurating one of the most powerful and volatile mentor-protégé relationships in American literary history." Ford Madox Ford had been introduced to Lowell, who was then under the psychiatric care of the former Fugitive poet Merrill Moore. Ford, recognizing Lowell's intelligence, handed him the following advice: "Young man, go south and learn how to write." Ford himself then traveled to Tennessee to live with the Tates while working on *The March of Literature*, where he grew ever more corpulent and suffered from "a variety of physical ailments aggravated by the greasy Tennessee food." To everyone's surprise, Lowell pulled up one day, urinated on the side of the road, and pitched a Sears, Roebuck tent in Tate's yard. Though Lowell proceeded to drive everyone crazy, he emerged from the experience awestruck

Mr. Morris is author of the novel *The Total View of Taftly*.

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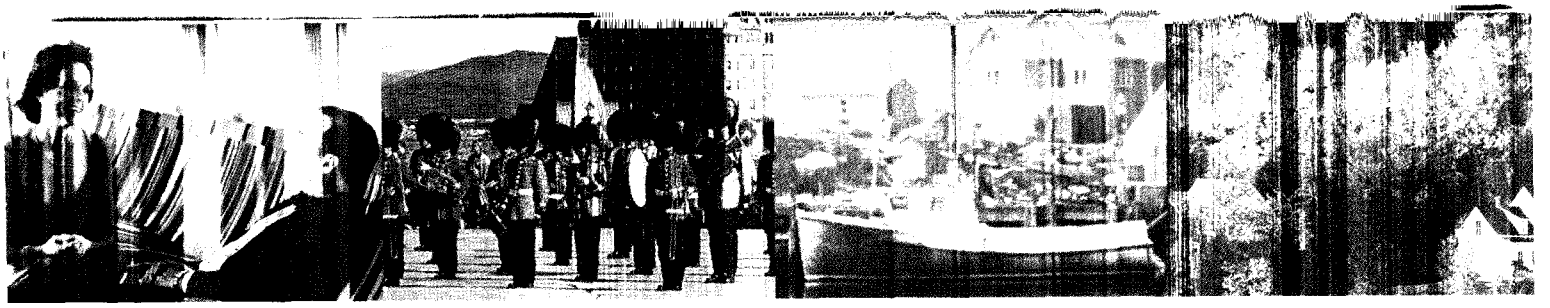

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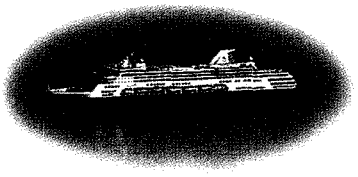

The National Review 2001

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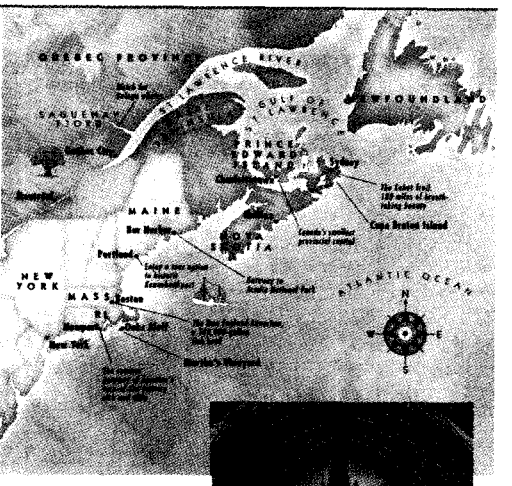
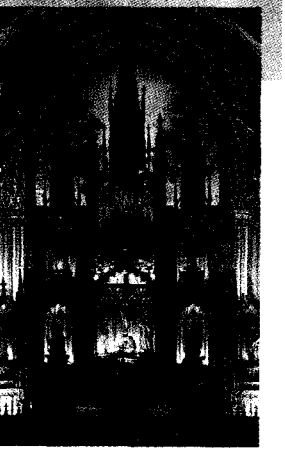
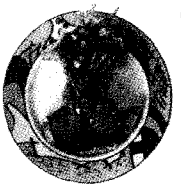
DAY 1 You arrive in New York City and board Holland America Line's stunning new MS *Amsterdam*. After getting settled in your spacious cabin, you explore the ship and take in its luxury, comfort, and elegance (so many antiques!). In the late afternoon, we depart the Big Apple, gracefully sailing by Lady Liberty. At night, feast on a gourmet meal (this may be one of the nights when you dine intimately with *NR* editors or guest speakers!), after which there is so much to do: maybe an exciting Broadway-style show, or a quiet cocktail at the piano bar. Whatever you do, you'll find sweet dreams awaiting you in your pleasant quarters.

DAY 2 After a delicious breakfast, you tour Newport: Witness the lavish excesses of this fabled city's Gilded Age by visiting the summer "cottages" of the Vanderbilts, Astors, and Morgans. Come afternoon, it's time for the first of six *National Review* seminars: Each of these exciting, two-hour panel sessions will feature stimulating discussions and debates (plus plenty of "Q&A") from a bevy of conservative all-stars. And what a group we will have on hand to discuss politics and policy: Joining **William F. Buckley Jr.**, will be jurist supreme **Robert Bork**, columnist **Robert Novak**, conservative cultural expert **Linda Chavez**, former Reagan National Security Adviser **Richard Allen**, the incomparable General **Vernon Walters**, the man who knows everybody who is anybody (via stints as CIA boss, ambassador to the U.N. and West Germany, Ike aide, and much more), UPI Editor-in-Chief (and *NR* Editor-at-Large) **John O'Sullivan**, plus the *NR* editorial "gang" of **Kate O'Beirne**, **Rich Lowry**, **Ramesh Ponnuru**, and **Jay Nordlinger**. Afterwards, relax: Catch an invigorating Indian Summer breeze on the Sky Deck, or use your $100 (per person!) cabin credit (our gift to you if you book by May 1) to indulge yourself with a soothing massage, or to book an additional tour. Then at 6:30 join the *NR* crowd for the first of our exclusive, fun-filled social events: tonight, a cocktail reception in the Crow's Nest Lounge (enjoy the top-shelf liquor, hot hors d'oeuvres, great music, and fantastic company!). Next: another delicious dinner (maybe at the intimate Odyssey Restaurant), followed by a wonderful evening with new-found friends.







SO VERY MUCH TO DO: HOW CAN YOU NOT COME?!

DAY/DATE	PORT	ARRIVE	DEPART	SPECIAL EVENTS
Thursday/Sept. 27	New York		4:45PM	
Friday/Sept. 28	Newport, R.I.	7:00AM	3:00PM	afternoon seminar evening cocktail reception
Saturday/Sept. 29	Boston, Mass.	7:30AM	6:00PM	**FREE** tour of historic Boston late-night poolside smoker
Sunday/Sept. 30	Bar Harbor, Me.	7:00AM	5:00PM	
Monday/Oct. 1	Halifax, N.S.	8:00AM	5:30PM	afternoon seminar
Tuesday/Oct. 2	Sydney, N.S.	7:00AM	6:30PM	
Wednesday/Oct. 3	Charlottetown, P.E.I.	7:00AM	3:00PM	afternoon seminar evening cocktail reception
Thursday/Oct. 4	Saguenay Fjord	Scenic Cruising		morning/afternoon seminars late-night poolside smoker
Friday/Oct. 5	Quebec	8:00AM		
Saturday/Oct. 6	Quebec	5:00PM		morning seminar evening cocktail reception
Sunday/Oct. 7	Montreal	8:00AM		

DAY 3 Breakfast in bed? Why not? Let the *Amsterdam*'s staff, renowned for its superior service, pamper you. A great day is in store: If you've signed up by May 1, you're *NR*'s guest for an extensive tour of historic Boston. Trinity Church, Beacon Hill, the Public Gardens, "Old Ironsides," the State House, Faneuil Hall, King's Chapel, the Old North Church, Harvard Yard: They're all stops on this special excursion, which is our gift to you. Tonight, after another great dinner, stop by *NR*'s poolside "smoker," featuring classic **H. Upmann** cigars and cognac!

DAY 4 Yes, you *are* having that much fun. Congratulate yourself for coming. You love the ship, you're making new friends. That was a pleasant breakfast with an *NR* editor, and fascinating dinner conversation with a guest speaker. And such sights! *NR*'s "Fall

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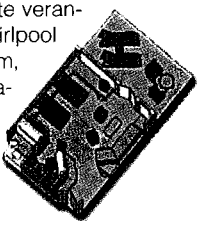

SUITE Luxury quarters (563 sq. ft.) features private verandah, king-size bed (convertible to 2 twin beds), whirlpool bath/shower, floor-to-ceiling windows, dressing room, large sitting area, sofa bed, VCR, mini-bar, refrigerator, concierge servce, complimentary personalized stationary, hors d'oeuvres, dry cleaning, and more, plus special disembarkation privileges.

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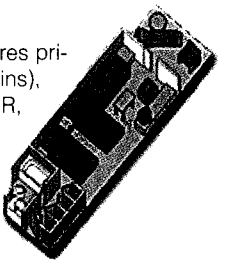

MINI SUITE Large stateroom (284 sq. ft.) features private verandah, king-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), sofa bed, whirlpool bath/shower, sitting area, VCR, mini-bar, refrigerator, floor-to-ceiling windows.

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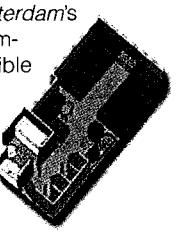

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Category K
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SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 6,399

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DAY 5 O Canada! We have arrived . . . in Halifax, the capital and cultural center of Nova Scotia and the "Maritimes." With granite boulders pounded by crashing surf, and lighthouses standing sentinel on rocky ledges, the ocean scenery is unrivaled. The city tour includes Halifax Citadel National Park, where the ramparts of a famous British fort and panoramic views await. Topping off this great day is another scintillating *National Review* seminar.

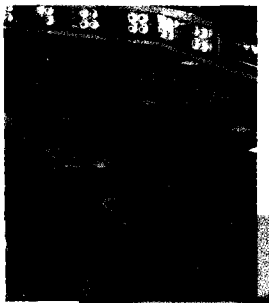
DAY 6 Sydney, Nova Scotia, is today's memorable stop. Cape Breton Island is so green and Gaelic. Explore the scenic 184-mile-long Cabot Trail, or tour the Fortress of Louisbourg, meticulously restored to its 1744 mint condition.

DAY 7 Charming Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, known for its red, sandy beaches, is a provincial capital with a distinctly English feel, where red double-decker buses motor along streets lined with gingerbread-trimmed Victorian houses. Visit Cavendish and the farmhouse immortalized in *Anne of Green Gables*. Why not try sea kayaking, or biking on the Confederation Trail, or a coastline nature walk? There's so much to do, *and* there's an *NR* seminar this afternoon, followed by a delightful cocktail reception.

DAY 8 Today we cruise Saguenay Fjord. Carved by a massive glacier at the confluence of the St. Lawrence and Saguenay Rivers, it will awe you with its 1,000-foot cliffs, tree-lined peaks, hidden coves, and frolicking Beluga whales. Catch these between morning and afternoon *NR* seminars. And tonight, there's another relaxing poolside "smoker" featuring **H. Upmann** cigars and cognac.

DAYS 9 AND 10 *Mon Dieu!* We'll spend *two* days in Quebec, the noble walled city with a French accent. Stroll Old Quebec's maze of cobbled streets, with quaint sidewalk cafés, boutiques, and antique shops. Tour Montmorency Falls, higher than Niagara. Promenade down the tree-lined Grand-Alle. Visit the renowned Basilica of Ste Anne de Beaupré, the Place Royale, the "Plains of Abraham," and the fabled Château Frontenac. Our final full day will feature another *NR* seminar, plus a farewell cocktail reception, where we'll toast a wonderful trip and new friendships.

AND FINALLY The *Amsterdam* reaches the destinantion port of Montreal on October 7. You'll disembark with memories that will last a lifetime. But, if you desire, the melody can "linger on": Consider an overnight stay to explore this cosmopolitan center of French Canada, or take a three-night "post cruise" package designed especially by Holland America. *Au revoir, nos amis!*



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Mail to: National Review Cruise, The Cruise Authority, 1307 Powers Ferry Rd., Marietta, GA 30067-5409 or Fax to 770-916-1425

Please fill out application completely and mail with deposit check or fax with credit-card information. One application per cabin. If you want more than one cabin, make copies of this application. For questions call The Cruise Authority at 800-707-1634.

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A deposit of $1,500 per cabin is due with this application. Cabins and categories are available on a first come, first served basis. *Suites are limited!*

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PRIOR *to May 25, 2001*	*$75 per person*	
May 26, 2001 to June 27, 2001	*$750 per person*	
AFTER *June 27, 2001*	*100% of cruise*	*319A*

3 Cruise

(All rates are per person, double occupancy. Single rates available upon request. Air/Sea rates include round-trip air and transfers from select gateways, all port charges and taxes, all gratuities, meals, entertainment, and *National Review* activities. Cruise-only rates include all of above except airfare and transfers. Failure to appear for embarkation for any reason constitutes a cancellation subject to full penalties. Personal items not included.)

PLEASE CHECK ALL APPLICABLE BOXES!

I. CABIN CATEGORY *(see list and prices on previous page)*

First cabin category choice:_____ Second cabin category choice:_____

Bedding: Beds made up as ☐ Twin ☐ King/Queen

BOOKING SINGLE? ☐ Please try to match me with a roommate. (My age: ____)

II. AIR/TRANSFER PACKAGES

☐ We will provide our own roundtrip air and transfers to New York and Montreal.

☐ Include air with our package from _____ (see list below).

☐ We need to purchase transfers from the airport to the ship at $32 per person.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

Citizenship: Is everyone a U.S. citizen? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If No, indicate citizenship: _____

IV. PRE- AND POST-CRUISE TOUR PACKAGES

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by Tate. "All the English classics," he recalled, "and some of the Greeks and Latins were at Tate's elbow. He maneuvered through them, coolly blasting, rehabilitating, now and then reciting key lines in an austere, vibrant voice. Turning to the moderns, he slaughtered whole Chicago droves of slipshod *Untermeyer Anthology* experimentalists."

The difficult Lowell wasn't the only writer to benefit from Tate's guidance. The equally difficult Hart Crane did as well. Like Lowell, he moved in with Tate and made a nuisance of himself. But he too found the help that he was looking for—Tate provided extensive editorial and emotional assistance while Crane was working on *The Bridge*. And when no one else in American publishing thought Vladimir Nabokov worth a try, it was Tate (working at Holt) who first published *Bend Sinister*. Tate even wrote a blurb for the novel, which Nabokov would later say was the best he'd ever received.

Tate's judgment as a critic and mentor was equaled by his talent as a writer. Though he wrote until his death, the turbulent years that Underwood recounts in this first volume were among his most prolific. "To hear the night, to crave its coming, one must have deep inside one's secret being a vast metaphor controlling all the rest: a belief in the innate evil of man's nature, and the need to face that evil, of which the symbol is darkness, of which again the living image is man alone." This justly famous passage from *The Fathers* makes clear that Tate had attained both wisdom and mastery of craft.

Tate was a fighter, and he didn't miss out on many of the cultural brawls of his time. In an era far more skeptical than our own, Tate, who would later convert to Catholicism, heralded the supremacy of a theological outlook. He and his fellow Agrarians challenged Communism throughout the 1930s, when Marxist and socialist ideas were ascendant among the intelligentsia. V. F. Calverton, the Marxist editor of the *Modern Quarterly*, Granville Hicks, literary editor of the *New Masses*, and the critic Waldo Frank—among others—were beginning to evaluate contemporary literature according to its social content, while Tate took up arms to keep art safe from politicization. Long before the dawn of modern conservatism in the 1950s, Tate and his brethren were fighting against collectivist and secularist agendas with all their considerable might.

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Tate was a fighter, and he didn't miss out on many of the cultural brawls of his time.

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Aside from these battles, Tate continued to write poetry, and would always consider writing poetry the most important thing he did. He recognized that in order to win what is nowadays referred to as the culture war, one must be an active participant in one's culture. He furthermore understood that such participation must be for artistic rather than political purposes. "I confess that the political responsibility of poets . . . irritates me because the poet has a great responsibility of his own," Tate stated in his essay "To Whom Is the Poet Responsible?"

Anyone wondering why Tate has been neglected need look no further than those words. Far more than Tate's political conservatism, it was his forceful defense of the belief in a pre-political life—which is to say a realm that both *precedes* and *transcends* political concerns—that has caused left-leaning academics to wish Tate could be made to go away. Raising above politics the concerns of marriage and family, art and literature, and piety and loyalty toward one's home is anathema in the highly politicized environment of today's academy.

It is also *precisely* why Tate is to be valued so highly. For he saw very clearly what most contemporary thinkers do not: The result of viewing everything through political eyes is a distortion of man's nature and harmful to his well-being. The enduring power of Tate's work is that it challenges this myopic vision, returning our eyes to what one of his favorite writers, William Faulkner, called the "old verities." To neglect these verities in favor of government programs and economic policies is to do nothing less than to forfeit our humanity. **NR**

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■ CITY DESK ■

Going Places

RICHARD BROOKHISER

I AM a New Yorker, and I want to get there. Where is that? Wherever I'm going, but I want to get there fast.

I was coming out of the 72nd Street subway station on the Broadway line recently when I was struck by this truth. This particular subway station is notorious for its congestion, having few staircases up from its platforms, and few exit doors aboveground. It sits in a traffic island, bound by one street flowing north, another flowing south, and a third flowing both east and west. Slowly and laboriously I was rebirthed from the station in a polliwog mass of a hundred other New Yorkers. Topside I saw that the DON'T WALK sign over the street I wished to cross was flashing red: a warning that the waiting cabs and buses were about to resume their mad scramble. To make the light, I would have to weave, broken-field, through the dozen human molecules jostling in Brownian motion on the traffic island, then spr-*int* across the crosswalk. If I waited through an entire DON'T WALK sign, I might lose all of 15 seconds. I did what any New Yorker would do, and made like O.J. (pre-murder). I want to get there.

If speed is of the essence, why take the subway? The subway system is transformed from the late '70s, when I first used it, and every graffiti-swirled car and station looked like Son of Sam's rec room. But it is still early-last-century technology, and the subway user must run the risk of delay (explained over the scratchy loudspeakers thus: KKHH-WWKKHHWKKWWK), as well as views of the odd scuttling rat. A good cab on a straightaway can beat the Canarsie line hollow, and there are no fauna in it either (generally speaking). Why then go underground? Because, at certain times of day, the subway does have a competitive advantage. Rush hour is the subway's peak of crowding and stress. But it is also the time when aboveground traffic comes to parking-lot stasis, especially in midtown. Then New Yorkers, like Zarathustra, go under.

We walk for the same reason—that other means of motion have failed. I was going to a black-tie function at the worst possible time and place (rush hour, midtown), which is the time and place of all such functions. Traveling in a cab, my momentum died somewhere on Madison Avenue behind St. Patrick's Cathedral. The clock hanging outside the Tourneau store mocked my immobility; since it is composed of three clock faces fused together, it mocked in triplicate: Ha! Ha! Ha! There was nothing for it but to pay Ali, the driver, and hoof it. My patent-leather shoes are a little stiff for the purpose, but the soles are good.

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What New Yorkers really want from their bustle is a sense of control: the conviction that every possible effort is being made.

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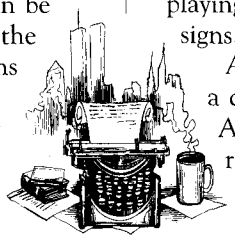
The key to rapid walking is always to be aware of a whole half block ahead of you. It helps me that I am tall. What can I advise short people? Tough luck; I have the competitive advantage. The worst place to be is the wall; you won't perish there, like Dale Earnhardt, but you often get boxed in. Curbs are tempting, though they are also where newspaper boxes, sign poles, and garbage bags lurk. Surprisingly good progress can be made in center sidewalk, at the interface of fellow pedestrians streaming one way and the other. Mayor Giuliani, by removing Senegalese umbrella peddlers and all-American panhandlers, has made the sidewalks less interesting, but swifter.



In my formal walkabout, I saw with admiration a pedestrian champion: a young woman roller-skating across 57th Street. Two men in suits blocked her slipstream, but she bumped their backs and parted them like Charlton Heston dividing the Red Sea. They expressed their surprise in some foreign language—it sounded like Russian—and with considerable good humor. They better be good-humored: They had been in a New Yorker's way. What do they know about getting there in Kursk?

By this time the attentive reader may suspect a truth deeper than the New Yorker's compulsion to move, which is that all our efforts make very little difference. With approximately a million people tangling in commercial Manhattan during business hours, the city moves at its tempo, not ours, and all our scrambling shaves at most a minute or five here and there. Evelyn Waugh captured the tidal imperturbability of big cities: "From Hyde Park Corner to Piccadilly Circus the line of traffic was continuous and motionless, still as a photograph, unbroken and undisturbed save at a few strategic corners where barricaded navvies, like desperate outposts of some proletarian defence, were rending the road with mechanical drills . . ." What New Yorkers really want from their bustle is a sense of control: the conviction that every possible effort is being made. There is a corollary to this need: It is always better to make slow progress than to wait for fast progress.

Most Americans derive the feeling of autonomy from owning cars. Upstate, only two hours from the Tourneau sign, there are people whose domestic animals are goats and whose toilets are the trunks of trees. But they all own SUVs. A furnace may be a Sassanian luxury, but four wheels are an inalienable right. The density of city life makes the dream of car ownership eccentric, so New Yorkers assert their self-mastery by playing chicken with DON'T WALK signs.

A final image: I am trying to hail a cab going downtown, on Ninth Avenue, my arm in the wind like a railroad signal. Two blocks away appears another lady skater, with a body like a pugilist's, all of its contours visible in a spandex sheath. She swings her arms and legs and curses, either in time to the music on her headphones, or at me, for being in her line of vision. I give her a wide and respectful berth. Five minutes later, I get a cab, and a mile south I catch up to the Valkyrie's piston hamstrings—almost. My cab turns off the avenue, and she continues, to where she is going. **NR**

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■ FILM ■

Games People Play

JOHN SIMON

FOR all its success, I wasn't aware of Helen Fielding's bestseller ***Bridget Jones's Diary*** until the movie version was making tsunamis at the box office. It is the journal of a 32-year-old London "singleton" who works in publishing; drinks, smokes, and weighs too much; and has problems with men. She yearns for her boss, the dashing Daniel Cleaver, a notorious Lothario, from whom only a glass partition and an unknown number of skinnier and sexier girls separate her.

She also has a yen for Mark Darcy, a handsome barrister and serious fellow with, to be sure, an equally serious and jealous lawyer girlfriend. And she has a trio of quirky single friends encouraging her, as well as some married ones discouraging her with patronizing smugness.

The film quickly drops the novel's diary format. It was directed by Sharon Maguire with many a feminine touch, from a screenplay by Andrew Davies, Richard Curtis (*Four Weddings and a Funeral* and *Notting Hill*, to both of which *Bridget Jones* bears a troubling resemblance), and Fielding herself, who may be the cutesiest of the trio, as a glance at her book suggests. The movie is, indeed, relentlessly cute in a crassly crowd-pleasing way. The audience I saw it with was in ecstasy over the emotional perils of the dippy Pauline, fluctuating between the cliché and the recherché.

Near the beginning of the movie, Bridget writes in her diary, "I suddenly realized that unless something changed soon, I was going to live a life where my major relationship was with a bottle of wine, and I'd finally die, fat and alone, and be found three weeks later half-eaten by wild dogs." When things go (comically) wrong, we get, "At times like this, continuing with one's life seems impossible and eating the entire contents of one's fridge seems inevitable. I have two choices: To give up, and accept permanent state of spinsterhood and eventual eating by dogs—or not. This time I choose not." That just about tells it all.

Actually, this is a wish-fulfillment fantasy for romantically disadvantaged women, as Bridget ends up with both dreamboats vying for her, for both realize in due time that she is the answer to a manchild's prayer—thereby making the losers in the audience feel briefly like winners. Renée Zellweger shed her Texas accent for a British one, acquired twenty pounds by a reverse diet, and worked for a few weeks as a factotum in a publishing house—no sacrifice too great for turning into Bridget. She is a good actress and has

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'Unless something changed soon, I was going to live a life where my major relationship was with a bottle of wine.'

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the right understated looks, but the face slowly melting from joy to sorrow or vice versa, the halting or blurted-out speech, the baby talk laced with bravado are beginning to come across as formulaic.

For Hugh Grant, as Daniel, it took only a minor adjustment to switch from adorable bumbler to adorable cad. Colin Firth, on whose portrayal of Mr. Darcy in a BBC version of *Pride and Prejudice* Fielding modeled *her* Darcy, is indeed the very model of the strong, silent hero. By way of further cuteness, guests at a publishing party are played by Salman Rushdie, Jeffrey Archer, and other literati. But the movie cheats in various small ways. When Bridget, unalerted to the fact that a planned costume party has been switched to normal dress, comes as a Playboy bunny and is duly humiliated by the immaculate guests, she returns to her lover without removing so much as her bunny ears, to incur further improbable ribbing. And even the questionable novel ends on a less unambiguously happy note than this mildly meretricious movie.

■ Another woman director, the Dutch Marleen Gorris, has come up with ***The Luzhin Defence***, from the Nabokov novel better known hereabouts as *The Defense*. That third novel by the young author, written in Russian, and pronounced by the Nabokov biographer Brian Boyd "the first masterpiece," has thus far eluded my reach. But from books about Nabokov, I can deduce that Peter Berry's screen adaptation is as loose as an overbraised goose.

There is some justification for the freeness. In the novel, Luzhin's wife has no name and is merely Luzhina (Mrs. Luzhin); even Luzhin's own full name is not revealed till the last page. (Nabokov loves mind games.) In the movie, Natalia, as she is called, is left waiting at the altar, Hollywood style; she rushes back to the hotel, only to find . . . I must not tell you what. Then, after Nabokov's ending, comes the added Gorris-Berry ending, totally feminist and highly un-Nabokovian, not to mention wholly unlikely.

Nabokov was a chess expert and columnist. As early as 1917, Boyd tells us, "Vladimir began to compose his first chess problems, a hobby that would . . . become a training ground in artistic strategy. Nabokov was never quite as good as

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might be expected as a conversationalist . . ." Here you have the novel in embryo. Luzhin, though a genius at chess, is inarticulate and cannot make small talk. In social situations, he is either preternaturally taciturn or bursts into the most inappropriate ejaculations—something the movie ferociously overdoes.

Yet even from the movie it is obvious that Luzhin is a mini-Nabokov, similarly concentrated on and constricted by his art, and similarly unworldly. To quote Boyd again, "In devising chess problems, Nabokov discovered the intensity of cerebration he knew from composing poems, a concentration of mental rays sufficient to burn a hole through time itself." That last phrase is typical of the hyperboles Nabokov worshippers are prone to; nevertheless, it suggests the quality of Luzhin's that Natalia finds so attractive.

As written by Berry and enacted by John Turturro, however, Luzhin is ripe, nay, overripe for the loony bin. Turturro is an interesting actor because of his maniacal intensity, which, along with his extremely odd looks, makes him more suited to character parts than to the kind of leading man an attractive and seemingly normal young woman would fall madly in love with. Especially not if, as in the movie, he is a manifest freak, so that her wish to marry him casts doubt on Natalia's sanity as well. For example, in the novel, the young woman asks the chess-champion hero how long he has been playing; he answers, "Eighteen years, three months, and four days," which is bizarre enough. But only the worst idiot savant would reply, as in the movie, after examining his watch, "9,263 days, four hours, and five minutes."

Emily Watson does her usual quiet and intense best as Natalia, but she cannot make the preposterous believable either. Supporting parts are well cast but, again, crudely written. Natalia's mother (played by Geraldine James), though quite rightly objecting to the intended marriage, is turned into a figure of low comedy. Valentinov (Stuart Wilson), the chess coach and manager, erroneously gives up on Luzhin, booting him out. Later, realizing his mistake, he becomes Luzhin's nemesis, going to diabolical lengths to prevent him from winning the world championship against Turati, the Italian grandmaster. There are, to be sure, such demons in Nabokov's fictions, say, *Laughter in the Dark* and *Lolita*, but they are not so obvious about it.

The Luzhin Defence is prettily shot by Bernard Lutic against splendid backgrounds on Lake Como and in Hungary, nowadays the customary stand-in for old Russia. The chess-competition sequences are reasonably well staged, and the film does not bore. If only it could also be credible. **NR**

■ BOOKS IN BRIEF ■

Love and Economics: Why the Laissez-Faire Family Doesn't Work, by Jennifer Roback Morse (Spence, 300 pp., $27.95)

ALTHOUGH libertarianism has great merit as a political and economic philosophy, its effects on the family have been disastrous, argues libertarian economist Jennifer Roback Morse. During the past half-century, both Right and Left have unwittingly collaborated in creating the laissez-faire family. The Right endorsed contractual relationships, emphasizing personal choice. The Left sought to weaken or break community and family ties to remove a competitor to the state. People today are paying a high price—in alarmingly high rates of divorce, illegitimacy, domestic violence, juvenile crime, and other social pathologies. Presenting ample evidence that "the laissez-faire family, in which each member pursues his own self-interest, does not make people very happy," Morse, currently at the Hoover Institution, documents the crucial role the "loving family" plays in developing moral and social capabilities such as trust and cooperation. Because it creates the self-restraining individuals who make free institutions possible, there is no realistic alternative to the loving family as the foundation of a free society.

Morse's own religious sensibility leads her to favor a vision of the family as a unity based on love rather than self-interest. She exposes the materialist, Marxist assumptions behind the laissez-faire family, showing that it is based on an unachievable, utopian vision of personal happiness. The inadequacy of materialism is why government support, private day care, and single parenting are all poor substitutes for loving families taking care of their own children. It is also why "persuasion, not legislation" is the appropriate tool for repairing the modern family. The solution will not come about through vast institutional changes, but by a genuine moral renewal and greater respect for the mediating institutions that operate in the social space between the family and the state. This important and persuasive book may itself be part of the solution, helping inspire a more fruitful national conversation about the family.

—S. T. KARNICK

Absolute Power: The Legacy of Corruption in the Clinton-Reno Justice Department, by David Limbaugh (Regnery, 385 pp., $27.95)

DAVID LIMBAUGH'S bestseller *Absolute Power* seems to be doing what it set out to do—making sure scandal-fatigued Americans remember what the Clinton years were all about. Limbaugh, brother of Rush and a lawyer and syndicated columnist, meticulously chronicles the subversion of the rule of law during the past eight years, when, under Janet Reno, the infamous "war room" mentality of Clinton's campaigns took over law enforcement in the United States. In covering the various abuses of executive power by the White House, from Waco to Elián, with the foreign-money scandals, the defamation of Ken Starr, and the war on tobacco in between, he emphasizes the complicity of Reno's Justice Department. Limbaugh accuses Reno of compromising national security by ignoring her deputies, refusing to appoint an independent counsel to probe the numerous campaign-finance scandals, directing the INS to change its immigration policy to accommodate the administration during the Elián González affair, assisting the White House in framing travel-office employees, and refusing to cooperate with Congress during Monicagate. *Absolute Power* is one more nail in Bill Clinton's political coffin.

—KATHRYN JEAN LOPEZ

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Whom Do We Blame?

NEW YORK, APRIL 10

THERE was a great event in Pennsylvania two weeks ago, but the background needs detailing.

A student chapter of Young Americans for Freedom at Penn State was organized and, as routinely is the case on that campus, applied to (no less) the Undergraduate Student Government Supreme Court for registration as a student organization. YAF's constitution contains a phrase, inherited from the founding organization statement in 1960, to the effect that human rights are "God-given" and therefore that human rights "derive from the right to be free from the restrictions of arbitrary force."

That sentiment (or affirmation) was not invented in Sharon, Connecticut, at the founding of the Young Americans for Freedom. The idea of God-given rights is about as novel in the United States as a speech by George Washington or Abraham Lincoln. But the supreme court of the undergraduate student government was not looking about for historical wavelengths. It ruled that YAF could not form a chapter so long as it contained that phrase in its constitution, inasmuch as to do so constituted religious "discrimination."

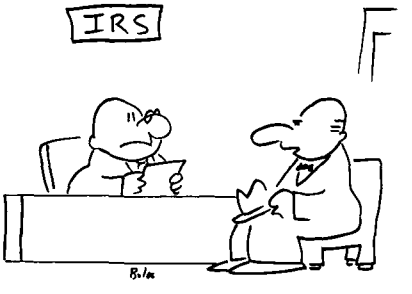
The Penn State YAF students drew a deep breath and filed an appeal to a student-faculty appeals board. That board unanimously reaffirmed the student supreme court in forbidding recognition to YAF.

The transaction caught the eye of Thor Halvorssen, a recent graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, who serves now as Executive Director of a relatively new association called the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (hence, FIRE). Alan Charles Kors, the president of FIRE, is a hefty intellectual, a historian who has written widely on 18th-century studies and has defended academic freedom vigorously. He wrote to the president of Penn State, Graham Spanier, noting straightforwardly that "it violates the anti-establishment clause of the First Amendment for PSU officially to elevate non-belief over belief, to the extent that believers are prohibited from organizing themselves into a group aimed at promoting their religious views. . . . It is PSU," he wrote, "that has demonstrated an unconstitutional intolerance of religious students."

Well, there is a very happy ending on this procedural point. President Spanier said he had been out of town when all this happened, but now that he focused on the point, he had to agree with Prof. Kors. And—quick like a flash!—"I am pleased to say that the Undergraduate Student Government Supreme Court met today and reversed its earlier decision. Registration has been granted to the Young Americans for Freedom."

That's good, and FIRE scored another victory, having in recent months taken on political correctness in Alaska, California, and elsewhere. FIRE's Board of Advisors include nationally prominent conservatives, such as David Brudnoy, T. Kenneth Cribb Jr., and Herbert London. But there are also straight-shooting liberals there, including Nat Hentoff and Roy Innis. They mobilized, a few weeks ago, to affirm the right of a woman poet at the University of Alaska to publish a poem even though, if one dug deep in it, one could note a despondency over that part of American Indian culture (she is herself part Indian) associated with sex abuse and alcoholism. Prof. Kors has been active in addressing complaints against the Orwellian (a necessary word here) appetite in many colleges to instill an altogether unnatural race consciousness, designed to encourage guilt.

"At Wake Forest University last fall," he wrote for *Reason* magazine, "one of the few events designated as 'mandatory' for freshman orientation was attendance at 'Blue Eyed,' a filmed racism-awareness workshop in which whites are abused, ridiculed, made to fail, and taught helpless passivity so that they can identify with 'a person of color for a day.' "



"Well—aren't you going to thank me for the surplus*?"*

Swarthmore edges out Wake Forest. There, in the fall of 1998, "first-year students were asked to line up by skin color, from lightest to darkest, and to step forward and talk about how they felt concerning their place in that line." And this kind of thing is not eccentric. "Indeed, at almost all of our campuses, some form of moral and political reeducation has been built into freshman orientation and residential programming. These exercises have become so commonplace that most students do not even think of the issues of privacy, rights, and dignity involved."

But here is a question not touched on by President Spanier. We know that YAF was permitted to affirm God as a sponsor of human rights. So the day was saved. But what about the student supreme court that refused registration? Ignorance? But if the students are to be excused, one wonders how it is that they arrived at such ignorance. And then of course the whopper: What about the student-*faculty* committee that reaffirmed the denial? What are we to do about them? Can FIRE come up with an orientation course, not for freshmen at Penn State, but for faculty? President Spanier will no doubt be silent on the subject, but in being silent, he may be overextending individual rights in education.

The Remaining Questions

NEW YORK, APRIL 13

ON the matter of the settlement, a few questions:

1. When do we renew our surveillance flights? If reports are to be believed, these flights have been going up "several" times per week. That is a lot more often than the U-2 flights over Russia back in 1960, which resulted in the raucous summit in Paris, the withdrawal of an invitation to President Eisenhower to go to Moscow, and a big page in the history of the Cold War. If we are doing surveillance flights in southeast China, why so intensively? What is it we are on to? Is what we are discovering there something that justifiably requires intensive monitoring?

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2. If these flights are necessary for U.S. interests in Southeast Asia, what are we prepared to do to continue them? What is China prepared to do to obstruct them? Have we put down the (regrettable? sorrowful?) end of the Chinese fighter plane as the just deserts of cowboy highflying?; or, have we concluded that the pilot who went down was acting on Chinese orders to obstruct the passage of our EP-3? If a) the Chinese are determined to obstruct the flights, and b) the United States is determined to continue the flights, how do we propose to do this? Are we intending fighter protection for our next flights? Will we be sorry, or very, very sorry, if our fighter plane knocks down a Chinese fighter plane?

3. Is it possible that we have developed the technology to get the information we need through satellite surveillance? This was what happened in 1960 when we phased out the U-2s. The Soviets having achieved anti-aircraft technology of their own, we went to our Peeping Toms. Do we have Peeping Toms that will do what we want done in southeast China? If so, is it understood in Peking that we are going to end the surveillance flights, relying on satellite flights? If so, are the Chinese going to spread the word that they have effectively stopped our flights, giving Peking an enormous psychological lift?

4. How come military specialists who have focused on the events of the past fortnight haven't told us what exactly it is that we are looking at in southeast China? We have been told that the Chinese are stepping up their submarine building, and we know that that can be harrowing news. In the 1980s, the Soviets were launching one MIRV-equipped nuclear submarine every month, and that news made even the likes of Henry Kissinger extremely apprehensive. Is that what we are staring at from our EP-3s? But why do we need to do that so often? If it took about a month for high-powered Soviet technology to produce one war submarine, it would take more than that much time for the Chinese to do the equivalent. So why do we need to check the progress so meticulously?

5. Something else is clearly going on. What? Is it some new and terrifying military device especially calculated to subdue Taiwan? Does it have to do with bacteriological warfare? Chemical warfare? But what do flights of such frequency do that gives us critical information? How is it that we can't just extrapolate what we see, giving us a reliable idea of what the Chinese are up to, or can accomplish, in one month, or two months? Is bureaucratic rigidity at play? Former Defense Secretary William Cohen said over the weekend that we "should resume surveillance flights" right away. He didn't say why, but as someone who was secretary of defense up until a few months ago, he should be expected to know what are the urgent reasons for continuing intensive aerial reconnaissance.

6. Granted that the Peking Adult Education machine is at liberty to spread whatever word it wishes to describe the American response to its protests, we can of course insist that we are custodians of the correct meaning of the English language—in fact, we can say the truth, which is that in lexicography, we long ago outpaced the font of the mother tongue, Great Britain. But whatever we say we intended to say by what we said—what matters is what crystallized opinion takes out of it all. Either the Japanese, the Indonesians, the Taiwanese, and the NATO powers are going to see what we did as reasonable and consistent with sound strategy, or they will conclude that the United States was scared off by Chinese bluster. Whether that is true is known only by President Bush.

Coming Up: Taiwan

NEW YORK, APRIL 17

THE moment is not far away when we will face what is most conveniently referred to as The Taiwan Question. The tense fortnight following the EP-3 incident taught us nothing conclusive, but demonstrated once again the profound nationalistic mood of the people of China. A summary of what we learned (or, of what we were reminded) was brilliantly done by John Derbyshire, writing in NATIONAL REVIEW. In his essay on China he writes, "Find a mainlander, preferably one under the age of thirty, and ask him which of the following he would prefer: for the Communists to stay in power indefinitely, unreformed, but in full control of the 'three T's' (Tibet, Turkestan, Taiwan); or a democratic, constitutional government *without* the three T's. His answer will depress you. You can even try this unhappy little experiment with dissidents: same answer."

It is all the more remarkable, from a Western perspective, when we are reminded not only that Taiwan has been under Peking supervision a mere four years in the last century, but that before it was taken by the Japanese in 1895 it was less than an integral part of China, being a mere prefecture of Fujian Province under the Manchu dynasty. But that has not lessened the passion of the Chinese for reannexation, and of course it has helped the historical dilemma not at all that everybody in sight—not only the Chinese, but the Taiwanese, the Americans, and the United Nations—repeat the catechism of One China. Suppose that at some point ahead Peking were to say that at the end of the then-current month, Taipei must disband its military forces and receive a delegation from Peking which will, upon landing, take effective control of the government. The moment is imaginable when Peking, confident of its resources and of its cause, can look us in the face and ask: Do you want Taiwan so badly as to countenance a nuclear bomb on Honolulu? And we are right back to balance of terror/mutual assured destruction.

There will be advisers who counsel Mr. Bush to do nothing truly provocative. To sell Taiwan Aegis-style naval weapons would be that, as also, probably, to sell submarines with relevant capability. They will counsel that we can cover our implicit retreat by strengthening our own patrols of the Strait of Formosa, constructing a kind of oceanic Maginot Line. The trouble here is obvious. Hitler maneuvered around his Maginot Line by relatively simple geographical deployment. In the showdown ahead, the United States would need to face the question whether to activate a deterrent force in our Maginot Line afloat on the China seas. How would we like it (we hear this from time to time) if the Chinese were poking about our own coastline? Mr. Derbyshire handles the question bluntly: "The answer is that the United States is a democracy of free people, whose government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed, so that the wider America's influence spreads, the better for humanity; while China is a corrupt, brutish, and lawless despotism, the close containment of which is a pressing interest for the whole human race." One cannot, of course, expect the Chinese people to be very receptive to his answer.

Which imposes upon the president the obligation to take measures that are not congenial to the Chinese people.

—UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

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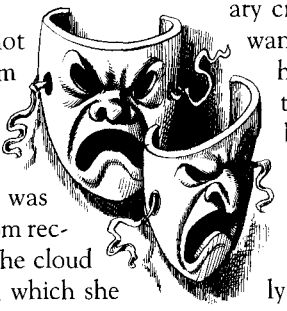
■ THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER ■

FLORENCE KING

THE new *GWTW* ripoff is the ebonically titled *The Wind Done Gone*, by Alice Randall, a black woman who tells the story via the diary of the mulatto Cynara, daughter of Gerald O'Hara and Mammy. Cynara is thus the half sister of Scarlett, whom Randall names "Other" and describes in a plagiaristic passage boldly lifted from the first sentence in the original book. It's a sentence I know well, having used it for years to test new typewriters:

"Scarlett O'Hara was not beautiful but men seldom realized it when caught by her charm as the Tarleton twins were."



Randall's version: "She was not beautiful, but men seldom recognized this, caught up in the cloud of commotion and scent in which she moved."

That's enough to give us a good idea of other dissonant horrors to come. The book is presently tied up in litigation by the Margaret Mitchell Estate's efforts to stop Houghton Mifflin from publishing it, but anyone who thinks it will never see the light of print should contemplate the bumper sticker that defines our times: "S**t happens."

Helping to shovel the book along is a clutch of concerned literary lights—Harper Lee, Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., Shelby Foote, and John Berendt—who have issued an open letter averring, "Now is the time for the American public to hear another perspective of this legend." Note that last word: A novel copyrighted in 1936 has been turned into a myth of antiquity, like Andromeda or Beowulf, too shrouded by the veils of time for anyone to state with certainty who the original author was, and ripe for plucking by any bard who feels like fiddling with it.

Following the arguments of the pro-publication side is like following Ariadne through the Labyrinth after she has run out of string. Race, not intellectual property, is the overriding issue. "Author" Randall takes a flying leap into post hoc, forging a direct connection between the Old South's prohibition on teaching slaves to read and write, and "those who would try to set up obstacles for a black woman to tell her story, and the story of her people, with words in writing."

Someone should explain to "Author" Randall that copyright laws did not grow out of the Black Codes, but Houghton Mifflin's intellectual-property lawyer, Joseph Beck, is too busy practicing literary criticism. The Mitchell Estate wants to censor Randall's book, he believes, because "I think they fear the ridicule that is brought to life. They know the misdepiction of African Americans is a weakness in *Gone with the Wind*."

Margaret Mitchell is regularly accused of ignoring miscegenation, but in fact she addresses it bluntly in Chapter 25 when Old Miss Fontaine, the gruff matriarch of a neighboring plantation, tells Scarlett what happened when Sherman came through.

> "They promised all the black wenches silk dresses and gold earbobs. . . . some of the troopers went off with the black fools behind them on their saddles. Well, all they'll get will be yellow babies and I can't say that Yankee blood will improve the stock."
>
> "Oh, Mama Fontaine!"
>
> "Don't pull such a shocked face, Jane. We're all married, aren't we? And, God knows, we've seen mulatto babies before this."

That "God knows" speaks volumes, and speaking volumes in few words is something that good writers know how to do. In this brief passage, Mitchell is saying that mulattos were a fact of life on plantations. Obviously it was so on the Fontaine place, home to Old Miss's three swashbuckling grandsons, Tony, Joe, and Alex; and probably on the Tarleton place, home to the hard-drinking twins, plus two more brothers who weren't in the movie.

We can only wonder about Tara based on what Mitchell chooses to tell us. Gerald O'Hara was a bachelor of 43 when he married 15-year-old Ellen Robillard. What did he do before that? As the book opens, Gerald is a vigorous 60, Ellen is only 32, and they still share a bed, yet "he knew there would be no more sons to follow the three who lay in the family burying ground." Why not? Would another pregnancy have killed Ellen? Was she barren? Was she frigid? If so, what did Gerald do now? Did he visit the slave cabins? Or was he sleeping with one or both of Tara's young upstairs maids, Rosa and Teena, who—interestingly—were frequently mentioned but never appeared?

There might be a story here but Mitchell wisely refrained from telling it because inclusion is best left to race junkies and compassionate conservatives. When practiced by writers it violates the artistic principle of selectivity; namely, anything that does not advance the plot or the characterization must come out. Accusing Margaret Mitchell of ignoring this aspect of slavery is another way of saying that she avoided distracting subplots and irrelevant digressions, crafted a coherent story by sticking to Scarlett's viewpoint, and kept control over her material for more than a thousand pages.

"Misdepiction of African Americans" is, of course, an unforgivable sin, but if she erred, she erred on the side of inclusion. Race junkies routinely condemn slaveholders for preferring light-skinned blacks as house servants, yet Mammy is described as "shining black, pure African." Pork, Gerald's valet and Tara's butler, is also "shining black," and Prissy, trained originally as India Wilkes's lady's maid, is "a brown little creature."

Mitchell is also accused of making her black characters happily docile, but this is disproved by a trenchant exchange in Chapter 35 that goes by so fast that only real *GWTW* aficionados remember it.

After the war, Scarlett, in Atlanta to entrap Frank Kennedy, tries to send Mammy out to buy rouge, but the shocked Mammy refuses. Furious, Scarlett orders her back to Tara, but Mammy's retort paints a portrait of social change in one brushstroke:

"You kain sen' me ter Tara ness Ah wants ter go. Ah is free." **NR**

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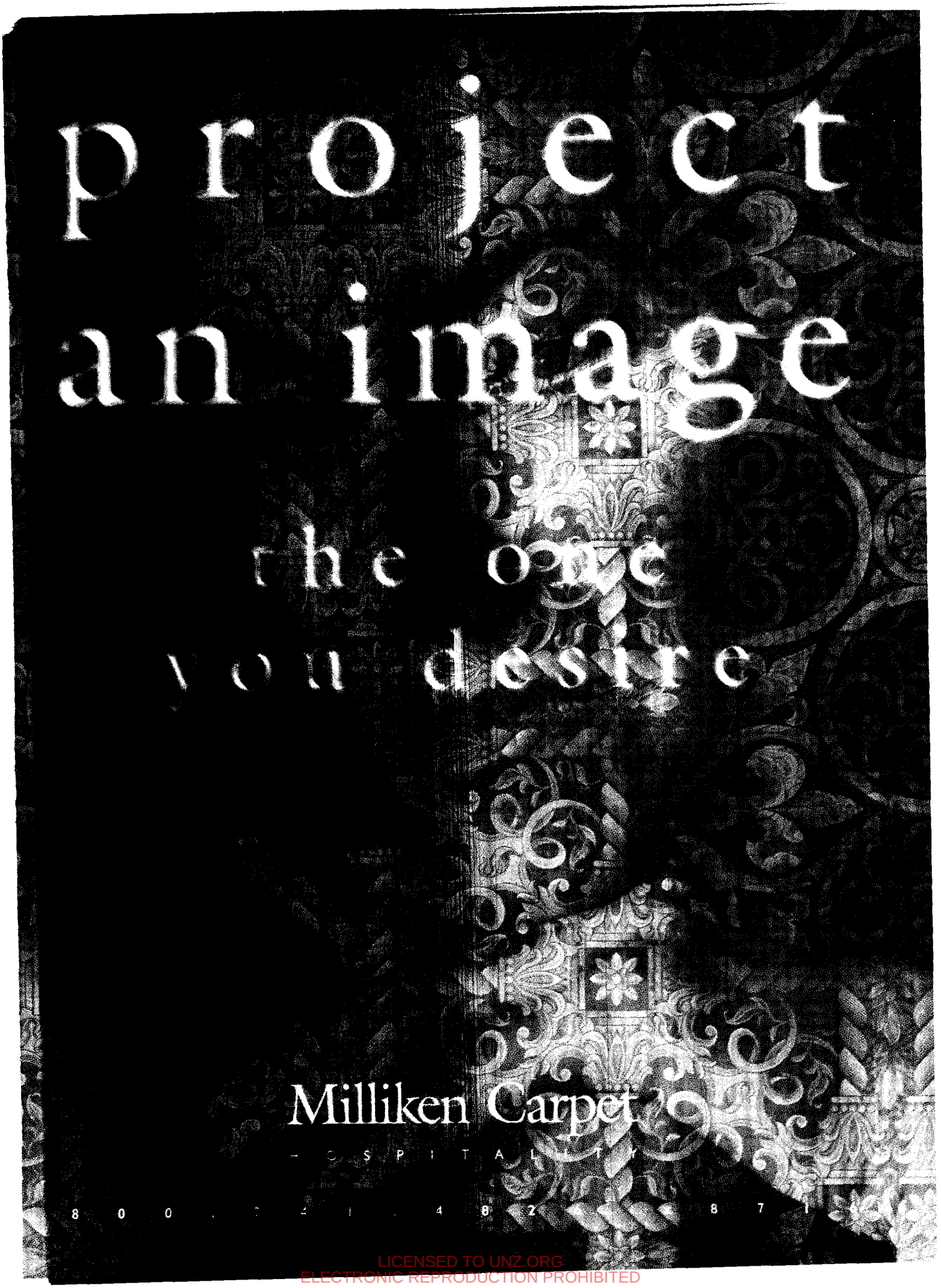

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— Nicholas Parisi

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